This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

KG353(1B)

REVENGE!—*Wyandotte.*

WORKS

OF

1892.

WORKS

OF

J. FENIMORE COOPER

WYANDOTTE.

THE MONIKINS.

JACK TIER.

ILLUSTRATED WITH WOOD-ENGRAVINGS.

COMPLETE IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOLUME SEVEN.

NEW YORK:
PETER FENELON COLLIER, PUBLISHER.
1892.

B
KG35 (7B)

WYANDOTTE;

OR,

THE HUTTED KNOLL.

PREFACE.

THE history of the borders is filled with legends of the sufferings of isolated families during the troubled scenes of colonial warfare. Those which we now offer to the reader are distinctive in many of their leading facts, if not rigidly true in the details. The first alone is necessary to the legitimate objects of fiction.

One of the misfortunes of a nation is to hear little besides its own praises. Although the American Revolution was probably as just an effort as was ever made by a people to resist the first inroads of oppression, the cause had its evil aspects, as well as all other human struggles. We have been so much accustomed to hear everything extolled, of late years, that could be dragged into the remotest connection with that great event, and the principles which led to it, that there is danger of overlooking truth, in a pseudo-patriotism. Nothing is really patriotic, however, that is not strictly true and just; any more than it is paternal love to undermine the constitution of a child by an indiscriminate indulgence in pernicious diet. That there were demagogues in 1776, is as certain as that there are demagogues now, and will probably continue to be demagogues as long as means for misleading the common mind shall exist.

A great deal of undigested morality is uttered to the world under the disguise of a pretended public virtue. In the eye of reason, the man who deliberately and voluntarily contracts civil engagements is more strictly bound to their fulfillment than he whose whole obligations consist of an accident over which he had not the smallest control, that of birth; though the very reverse of this is usually maintained under the influence of popular prejudice. The reader will probably discover how we view this matter, in the course of our narrative.

Perhaps this story is obnoxious to the charge of a slight anachronism, in representing the activity of the Indians a year earlier than any were actually employed in the struggle in 1775. During the century of warfare that existed between the English and French colonies, the savage tribes were important agents in furthering the views of the respective belligerents. The war was on the frontiers, and these fierce savages were, in a measure, necessary to the management of hostilities that invaded their own villages and hunting-grounds. In 1775 the enemy came from the side of the Atlantic, and it was only after the struggle had acquired force, that the operations of the interior rendered the services of such allies desirable. In other respects, without pretending to refer to any real events, the incidents of this tale are believed to be sufficiently historical for all legitimate purposes of fiction.

In this book the writer has aimed at sketching several distinct varieties of the human race, as true to the governing impulse of their educations, habits, modes of thinking and natures. The red man had his morality, as much as his white brother, and it is well known that even Christian ethics are colored and governed by standards of opinion set up on purely human authority. The honesty of one Christian

is not always that of another, any more than his humanity, truth, fidelity or faith. The spirit must quit its earthly tabernacle altogether, ere it cease to be influenced by its tints and imperfections.

CHAPTER I.

"An acorn fell from an old oak-tree,
And lay on the frosty ground—
'Oh, what shall the fate of the acorn be?'
Was whispered all around
By low-toned voices chiming sweet,
Like a floweret's bell when swung—
And grasshopper steeds were gathering fleet,
And the beetle's hoofs up-rung."

—MRS. SEBA SMITH.

THERE is a widespread error on the subject of American scenery. From the size of the lakes, the length and breadth of the rivers, the vast solitudes of the forest, and the seemingly boundless expanse of the prairies, the world has come to attach to it an idea of grandeur; a word that is in nearly every case misapplied. The scenery of that portion of the American continent which has fallen to the share of the Anglo-Saxon race very seldom rises to a scale that merits this term; when it does it is more owing to the accessories, as in the case of the interminable woods, than to the natural face of the country. To him who is accustomed to the terrific sublimity of the Alps, the softened and yet wild grandeur of the Italian lakes, or to the noble witchery of the shores of the Mediterranean, this country is apt to seem tame and uninteresting as a whole; though it certainly has exceptions that carry charms of this nature to the verge of loveliness.

Of the latter character is the face of most of that region which lies in the angle formed by the junction of the Mohawk with the Hudson, extending as far south, or even farther, than the line of Pennsylvania, and west to the verge of that vast rolling plain which composes Western New York. This is a region of more than ten thousand square miles of surface, embracing to-day ten counties at least, and supporting a rural population of near half a million of souls, excluding the river towns.

All who have seen this district of country, and who are familiar with the elements of charming rather than grand scenery it possesses, are agreed in extolling its capabilities, and, in some instances, its realities. The want of high finish is common to everything of this sort in America; and perhaps we may add that the absence of picturesqueness as connected with the works of man, is a general defect; still, this particular region, and all others resembling it—for they abound on the wide surface of the twenty-six States—has beauties of its own that it would be difficult to meet with in any of the older portions of the earth.

They who have done us the honor to read our previous works, will at once understand that the district to which we allude is that of which we have taken more than one occasion to write; and we return to it now less with a desire to celebrate its charms than to exhibit them in a somewhat novel, and yet perfectly historical aspect. Our own earlier labors will have told the reader that all of this extended district of country, with the exception of belts of settlements along the two great rivers named, was a wilderness anterior to the American Revolution. There was a minor class of exceptions to this general rule, however, to which it will be proper to advert, lest, by conceiving us too literally, the reader may think he can convict us of a contradiction. In order to be fully understood, the explanation shall be given at a little length.

While it is true, then, that the mountainous region which now contains the counties of Schoharie, Otsego, Chenango, Broome, Delaware, etc., was a wilderness in 1775, the colonial governors had begun to make grants of its lands some twenty years earlier. The patent of the estate on which we are writing lies before us; and it bears the date of 1769, with an Indian grant annexed that is a year or two older. This may be taken as a mean date for the portion of country alluded to; some of the deeds being older, and others still more recent. These grants of land were originally made subject to quit-rents to the crown; and usually on the payment of

heavy fees to the colonial officers after going through the somewhat superogatory duty of "extinguishing the Indian title," as it was called. The latter were pretty effectually "extinguished" in that day, as well as in our own; and it would be a matter of curious research to ascertain the precise nature of the purchase-money given to the aborigines. In the case of the patent before us, the Indian right was "extinguished" by means of a few rifles, blankets, kettles, and beads; though the grant covers a nominal hundred thousand, and a real hundred and ten or twenty thousand acres of land.

The abuse of the grants, as land became more valuable, induced a law, restricting the number of acres patented to any one person, at any one time, to a thousand. Our monarchial predecessors had the same facilities, and it may be added, the same propensities, to rendering a law a dead letter, as belongs to our republican selves. The patent on our table, being for a nominal hundred thousand acres, contains the names of one hundred different grantees, while three several parchment documents at its side, each signed by thirty-three of these very persons, vest the legal estate in the first named, for whose sole benefit the whole concession was made; the dates of the last instruments succeeding, by one or two days, that of the royal patent itself.

Such is the history of most of the original titles to the many estates that dotted the region we have described, prior to the Revolution. Money and favoritism, however, were not always the motives of these large concessions. Occasionally, services presented their claims; and many instances occur in which old officers of the army, in particular, received a species of reward, by a patent for land, the fees being duly paid and the Indian title righteously "extinguished." These grants to ancient soldiers were seldom large, except in the cases of officers of rank; three or four thousand well selected acres being a sufficient boon to the younger sons of Scottish lairds or English squires, who had been accustomed to look upon a single farm as an estate.

As most of the soldiers mentioned were used to forest life, from having been long stationed at frontier posts, and had thus become familiarized with its privations and hardened against its dangers, it was no unusual thing for them to sell out, or go on half pay, when the wants of a family began to urge their claims, and to retire to their "patents," as the land itself, as well as the instrument by which it was granted, was invariably termed, with a view of establishing themselves permanently as landlords.

These grants from the crown, in the portions of the colony of New York that lie west of the river counties, were generally, if not invariably, simply concessions of the fee, subject to quit-rents to the king, and reservations of mines of the precious metal, without any of the privileges of feudal seignory, as existed in the older manors on the Hudson, on the islands, and on the Sound. Why this distinction was made, it exceeds our power to say; but, that the fact was so, as a rule, we have it in proof, by means of a great number of the original patents themselves, that have been transmitted us from various sources. Still, the habits of "home" entailed the name, even where the thing was not to be found. Titular manors exist, in a few instances, to this day, where no manorial rights were ever granted; and manor-houses were common appellations for the residences of the landlords of large estates, that were held in fee, without any exclusive privileges, and subject to the reservation named. Some of these manorial residences were of so primitive an appearance as to induce the belief that the names were bestowed in pleasantry; the dwellings themselves being of logs, with the bark still on them, and the other fixtures to correspond. Notwithstanding all these drawbacks, early impressions and rooted habits could easily transfer terms to such an abode; and there was always a saddened enjoyment among these exiles, when they could liken their forest names and usages to those they had left in the distant scenes of their childhood.

The effect of the different causes we have

here given was to dot the region described, though at long intervals, with spots of a semi-civilized appearance, in the midst of the vast—nay, almost boundless—expanse of forest. Some of these early settlements had made considerable advances toward finish and comfort ere the war of '76 drove their occupants to seek protection against the inroads of the savages; and long after the influx of immigration which succeeded the peace, the fruits, the meadows and the tilled fields of these oases in the desert rendered them conspicuous amidst the blackened stumps, piled logs and smooty fellows of an active and bustling settlement. At even a much later day they were to be distinguished by the smoother surfaces of their fields, the greater growth and more bountiful yield of their orchards, and by the general appearance of a more finished civilization and of greater age. Here and there a hamlet had sprung up; and isolated places, like Cherry Valley and Wyoming, were found, that have since become known to the general history of the country.

Our present tale now leads us to the description of one of those early personal or family settlements that had grown up in what was then a very remote part of the territory in question, under the care and supervision of an ancient officer of the name of Willoughby. Captain Willoughby, after serving many years, had married an American wife, and continuing his services until a son and daughter were born, he sold his commission, procured a grant of land, and determined to retire to his new possessions, in order to pass the close of his life in the tranquil pursuits of agriculture and in the bosom of his family. An adopted child was also added to his cares. Being an educated as well as a provident man, Captain Willoughby had set about the execution of this scheme with deliberation, prudence, and intelligence. On the frontiers, or lines, as it is the custom to term the American boundaries, he had become acquainted with a Tuscarora, known by the English *soubriquet* of "Saucy Nick." This fellow, a sort of half outcast from his own people, had early attached himself to the whites, had acquired their language, and owing to a singular mixture of good and bad qualities, blended with great native shrewdness, he had wormed himself into the confidence of several commanders of small garrisons, among whom was our captain. No sooner was the mind of the latter made up concerning his future course, than he sent for Nick, who was then in the fort, when the following conversation took place:

"Nick," commenced the captain, passing his hand over his brow, as was his wont when in a reflecting mood; "Nick, I have an important movement in view, in which you can be of some service to me."

The Tuscarora, fastening his dark basilisk-like eyes on the soldier, gazed a moment, as if to read his soul; then he jerked a thumb backward over his own shoulder, and said, with a grave smile—

"Nick understand. Want six, two, scalp off Frenchman's head; wife and child; out yonder, over dere, up in Canada. Nick do him—what you give?"

"No, you red rascal, I want nothing of the sort—it is peace now" (this conversation took place in 1764), "and you know I never bought a scalp in time of war. Let me hear no more of this."

"What you want *den?*" asked Nick, like one who was a good deal puzzled.

"I want land—*good* land—little, but *good*. I am about to get a grant—a patent——"

"Yes," interrupted Nick, nodding; "I know *him*—paper to take away Indian's hunting-ground."

"Why, I have no wish to do that—I am willing to pay the red men reasonably for their right, first."

"Buy Nick's land, den—better than any oder."

"Your land, knave? You own no land—belong to no tribe—have no rights to sell."

"What for ask Nick help, den?"

"What for? Why because you *know* a good deal, though you own literally nothing. That's what for."

"Buy Nick *know*, den. Better dan de great fader *know* down at New York."

"That is just what I do wish to purchase. I will pay you well, Nick, if you will start to-morrow, with your rifle and a pocket-compass off here toward the head waters of the Susquehannah and Delaware, where the streams run rapidly, and where there are no fevers, and bring me an account of three or four thousand acres of rich bottom land, in such a way as a surveyor can find it, and I can get a patent for it. What say you, Nick; will you go?"

"He not wanted. Nick sell'e captain his own land; here in 'e fort."

"Knave, do you not know me well enough not to trifle when I am serious?"

"Nick ser'ous, too—Moravian priest no ser'ouser more dan Nick at dis moment. Got land to sell."

Captain Willoughby had found occasion to punish the Tuscarora in the course of his services; and as the parties understood each other perfectly well, the former saw the improbability of the latter's daring to trifle with him.

"Where is this land of yours, Nick?" he inquired, after studying the Indian's countenance for a moment. "Where does it lie, what is it like, how much is there of it, and how came you to own it?"

"Ask him just ser ag'in," said Nick, taking up four twigs, to note down the questions *seriatim*.

The captain repeated his inquiries, the Tuscarora laying down a stick at each separate interrogatory.

"Where he be?" answered Nick, taking up a twig, as a memorandum. "He out dere—where he want him—where he say. One day's march from Susquehannah."

"Well; proceed."

"What he like? Like land, to be sure. Think he like water! Got *some* water—no too much—got some land—got no tree got some tree. Got good sugar-bush—got place for wheat and corn."

"Proceed."

"How much of him?" continued Nick, taking up another twig; "much as he want—want little, got him—want more, got him. Want none at all, got none at all—got what he want."

"Go on."

"To be sure. How came to own him? How a pale-face come to own America? *Discover* him—ha! Well, Nick discover land down yonder, up dere, over here."

"Nick, what the devil do you mean by all this?"

"No mean devil, at all—mean land——*good* land. *Discover* him—know where he is—catch beaver dere, three, two year. All Nick say, true as word of honor; much more, too."

"Do you mean it is an old beaver-dam destroyed?" asked the captain, pricking up his ears; for he was too familiar with the woods not to understand the value of such a thing.

"No destroy—stand up yet—good as ever. Nick dere, last season."

"Why, then, do you tell of it? Are not the beaver of more value to you than any price you may receive for the land?"

"Cotch him all, four, two year ago—rest run away. No find beaver to stay long when Indian once know, two time, where to set he trap. Beaver cunninger 'an pale-face—cunning as bear."

"I begin to comprehend you, Nick. How large do you suppose this pond to be?"

"He'm not as big as Lake Ontario. S'pose him smaller, what den? Big enough for farm."

"Does it cover one or two hundred acres, think you? Is it as large as the clearing around the fort?"

"Big as two, six, four of him. Take forty skin, dere, one season. Little lake; all 'e tree gone."

"And the land around it—is it mountainous and rough, or will it be good for corn?"

"All sugar-bush—what you want better? S'pose you want corn; *plant* him. S'pose you want sugar; *make* him."

Captain Willoughby was struck with this description, and he returned to the subject again and again. At length, after extracting all the information he could get from Nick, he struck a bargain with the fellow. A surveyor was engaged, and he started for the place, under the guidance of the Tuscarora. The

result showed that Nick had not exaggerated. The pond was found, as he had described it to be, covering at least four hundred acres of low bottom-land; while near three thousand acres of higher river-flat, covered with beech and maple, spread around it for a considerable distance. The adjacent mountains, too, were arable, though bold, and promised, in time, to become a fertile and manageable district. Calculating his distances with judgment, the surveyor laid out his metes and bounds in such a manner as to include the pond, all the low-land, and about three thousand acres of hill, or mountain, making the materials for a very pretty little "patent" of somewhat more than six thousand acres of capital land. He then collected a few chiefs of the nearest tribe, dealt out his rum, tobacco, blankets, wampum, and gunpowder; got twelve Indians to make their marks on a bit of deer-skin, and returned to his employer with a map, a field-book, and a deed, by which the Indian title was "extinguished." The surveyor received his compensation, and set off on a similar excursion, for a different employer, and in another direction. Nick got his reward, too, and was well satisfied with the transaction. This he afterwards called "sellin' beaver when he all run away."

Furnished with the necessary means, Captain Willoughby now "sued out his patent," as it was termed, in due form. Having some influence, the affair was soon arranged; the grant was made by the governor in council, a massive seal was annexed to a famous sheet of parchment, the signatures were obtained; and "Willoughby's Patent" took its place on the records of the colony, as well as on its maps. We are wrong as respects the latter particular; it did not take *its* place on the maps of the colony, though it took *a* place; the location given, for many years afterward, being some forty or fifty miles too far west. In this peculiarity there was nothing novel, the surveys of all new regions being liable to similar trifling mistakes. Thus it was that an estate, lying within five-and-twenty miles of the city of New York, and in which we happen to have a small interest at this hour, was clipped of its fair proportions, in consequence of losing some miles that ran over obtrusely in another colony; and, within a short distance of the spot where we are writing, a "patent" has been squeezed entirely out of existence, between the claims of two older grants.

No such calamity befell "Willoughby's Patent," however. The land was found, with all its "marked or *blazed* trees," its "heaps of stones," "large butternut corners," and "dead oaks." In a word, everthing was as it should be; even to the quality of the soil, the beaver-pond, and the quantity. As respects the last, the colony never gave "struck measure;" a thousand acres on paper seldom falling short of eleven or twelve hundred in soil. In the present instance the six thousand two hundred and forty-six acres of "Willoughby's Patent" were subsequently ascertained to contain just seven thousand and ninety-two acres of solid ground.

Our limits and plans will not permit us to give more than a sketch of the proceedings of the captain in taking possession; though we feel certain that a minute account of the progress of such a settlement would possess a sort of Robinson Crusoe-like interest that might repay the reader. As usual, the adventurers commenced their operations in the spring. Mrs. Willoughby and the children were left with their friends in Albany, while the captain and his party pioneered their way to the patent in the best manner they could. This party consisted of Nick, who went in the capacity of hunter, an office of a good deal of dignity, and of the last importance to a set of adventurers on an expedition of this nature. Then there were eight axemen, a house-carpenter, a mason, and a millwright. These, with Captain Willoughby and an invalid sergeant of the name of Joyce, composed the party.

Our adventurers made most of their journey by water. After finding their way to the head of the Canaideraga, mistaking it for the Otsego, they felled trees, hollowed them into canoes, embarked, and, aided by a yoke of oxen that were driven along the shore, they wormed their way

through the oaks into the Susquehannah, descending that river until they reached the Unadilla, which stream they ascended until they came to the small river known in the parlance of the country by the erroneous name of a creek, that ran through the captain's new estate. The labor of this ascent was exceedingly severe; but the whole journey was completed by the end of April, and while the streams were high. Snow still lay in the woods; but the sap had started, and the season was beginning to show its promise.

The first measure adopted by our adventurers was to "hut." In the very center of the pond, which, it will be remembered, covered four hundred acres, was an island of some five or six acres in extent. It was a rocky knoll that rose forty feet above the surface of the water, and was still crowned with noble pines, a species of tree that had escaped the ravages of the beaver. In the pond itself a few "stubs" alone remained, the water having killed the trees, which had fallen and decayed. This circumstance showed that the stream had long before been dammed; successions of families of beavers having probably occupied the place, and renewed the works, for centuries, at intervals of generations. The dam in existence, however, was not very old; the animals having fled from their great enemy, man, rather than from any other foe.

To the island Captain Willoughby transferred all his stores, and here he built his hut. This was opposed to the notions of his axe-men, who, rightly enough, fancied the mainland would be more convenient; but the captain and the sergeant, after a council of war, decided that the position on the knoll would be the most military, and might be defended the longest against man or beast. Another station was taken up, however, on the nearest shore, where such of the men were permitted to "hut" as preferred the location.

These preliminaries observed, the captain meditated a bold stroke against the wilderness, by draining the pond and coming at once into the possession of a noble farm, cleared of trees and stumps, as it might be by a *coup de main*. This would be compressing the results of ordinary years of toil into those of a single season, and everybody was agreed as to the expediency of the course, provided it were feasible.

The feasibility was soon ascertained. The stream, which ran through the valley, was far from swift until it reached a pass where the hills approached each other in low promontories; there the land fell rapidly away to what might be termed a low terrace. Across this gorge, or defile, a distance of about five hundred feet, the dam had been thrown, a great deal aided by the position of some rocks that here rose to the surface, and through which the little river found its passage. The part which might be termed the keystone of the dam was only twenty yards wide, and immediately below it the rocks fell away rapidly quite sixty feet, carrying down the waste water in a sort of fall. Here the millwright announced his determination to commence operations at once, putting in a protest against destroying the works of the beavers. A pond of four hundred acres being too great a luxury for the region, the man was overruled, and the labor commenced.

The first blow was struck against the dam about nine o'clock on the 2d day of May, 1765, and by evening the little sylvan-looking lake, which had lain embedded in the forest, glittering in the morning sun, unruffled by a breath of air, had entirely disappeared! In its place there remained an open expanse of wet mud, thickly covered with pools and the remains of beaver-houses, with a small river winding its way slowly through the slime. The change to the eye was melancholy indeed; though the prospect was cheering to the agriculturist. No sooner did the water obtain a little passage, than it began to clear the way for itself, gushing out in a torrent through the pass already mentioned.

The following morning Captain Willoughby almost mourned over the work of his hands. The scene was so very different from that it had presented when the flats were covered with water that it was impossible not to feel the change. For quite a month it had an influence on the

whole party. Nick, in particular, denounced it, as unwise and uncalled for, though he had made his price out of the very circumstance in prospective; and even Sergeant Joyce was compelled to admit that the knoll, an island no longer, had quite lost half its security as a military position. The next month, however, brought other changes. Half the pools had vanished by drainings and evaporation; the mud had begun to crack, and in some places to pulverize; while the upper margin of the old pond had become sufficiently firm to permit the oxen to walk over it without miring it. Fences of trees, brush, and even rails, inclosed, on this portion of the flats, quite fifty acres of land; and Indian corn, oats, pumpkins, peas, potatoes, flax, and several other sorts of seed, were already in the ground. The spring proved dry, and the sun of the forty-third degree of latitude was doing its work with great power and beneficence. What was of nearly equal importance, the age of the pond had prevented any recent accumulation of vegetable matter, and consequently spared those who labored around the spot the impurities of atmosphere usually consequent on its decay. Grass seed, too, had been liberally scattered on favorable places, and things began to assume the appearance of what is termed "living."

August presented a still different picture. A saw-mill was up, and had been at work for some time. Piles of green boards began to make their appearance, and the plane of the carpenter was already in motion. Captain Willoughby was rich, in a small way; in other words, he possessed a few thousand pounds besides his land, and had yet to receive the price of his commission. A portion of these means was employed judiciously to advance his establishment; and, satisfied that there would be no scarcity of fodder for the ensuing winter, a man had been sent into the settlements for another yoke of cattle and a couple of cows. Farming utensils were manufactured on the spot, and sleds began to take the place of carts; the latter exceeding the skill of any of the workmen present.

October offered its products as a reward for all this toil. The yield was enormous, and of excellent quality. Of Indian corn the captain gathered several hundred bushels, besides stacks of stalks and tops. His turnips, too, were superabundant in quantity, and of a delicacy and flavor entirely unknown to the precincts of old lands. The potatoes had not done so well; to own the truth, they were a little watery, though there were enough of them to winter every hoof he had, of themselves. Then the peas and garden truck were both good and plenty; and a few pigs having been procured, there was the certainty of enjoying plenty of that important article, pork, during the coming winter.

Late in the autumn, the captain rejoined his family in Albany, quitting the field for winter quarters. He left Sergeant Joyce in garrison, supported by Nick, a miller, the mason, carpenter, and three of the axe-men. Their duty was to prepare materials for the approaching season to take care of the stock, to put in winter crops, to make a few bridges, clear out a road or two, haul wood to keep themselves from freezing, build a log barn and some sheds, and otherwise to advance the interest of the settlement. They were also to commence a house for the patentee.

As his children were at school, Captain Willoughby determined not to take his family immediately to the Hutted Knoll, as the place soon came to be called, from the circumstances of the original bivouac. This name was conferred by Sergeant Joyce, who had a taste in that way, and as it got to be confirmed by the condescension of the proprietor and his family, we have chosen it to designate our present labors. From time to time, a messenger arrived with news from the place; and twice, in the course of the winter, the same individual went back with supplies and encouraging messages to the different persons left in the clearing. As spring approached, however, the captain began to make his preparations for the coming campaign, in which he was to be accompanied by his wife; Mrs. Willoughby, a mild, affectionate, true-hearted New York woman, having decided not to let her hus-

band pass another summer in that solitude without feeling the cheering influence of her presence.

In March, before the snow began to melt, several sleigh-loads of different necessaries were sent up the valley of the Mohawk, to a point opposite the head of the Otsego, where a thriving village called Fortplain now stands. Thence men were employed in transporting the articles, partly by means of "jumpers" improvised for the occasion, and partly on packhorses, to the lake, which was found this time, instead of its neighbor the Canaderaiga. This necessary and laborious service occupied six weeks, the captain having been up as far as the lake once himself; returning to Albany, however, ere the snow was gone.

CHAPTER II.

"All things are new—the buds, the leaves,
That gild the elm-tree's nodding crest,
And even the nest beneath the eaves—
There are no birds in last year's nest."
—LONGFELLOW.

"I HAVE good news for you, Wilhelmina," cried the captain, coming into the parlor where his wife used to sit and knit or sew quite half the day, and speaking with a bright face, and in a cheerful voice —"Here is a letter from my excellent old Colonel; and Bob's affair is all settled and agreed on. He is to leave school next week, and to put on his Majesty's livery the week after."

Mrs. Willoughby smiled, and yet two or three tears followed each other down her cheeks, even while she smiled. The first was produced by pleasure at hearing that her son had got an ensigncy in the 60th, or Royal Americans, and the last was a tribute paid to nature; a mother's fears at consigning an only boy to the profession of arms.

"I am rejoiced, Willoughby," she said, "because *you* rejoice, and I know that Robert will be delighted at possessing the King's commission; but he is *very* young to be sent into the dangers of battle and the camp!"

"I was younger when I actually went into battle, for *then* it was war; now, we have a peace that promises to be endless, and Bob will have abundance of time to cultivate a beard before he smells gunpowder. As for myself"—he added, in a half-regretful manner, for old habits and opinions would occasionally cross his mind —"as for myself, the cultivation of turnips must be my future occupation. Well, the bit of parchment is sold, Bob has got *his* in its place, while the difference in price is in my pocket, and no more need be said—and here come our dear girls, Wilhelmina, to prevent any regrets. The father of two such daughters ought at least to be happy."

At this instant Beulah and Maud Willoughby (for so the adopted child was called as well as the real) entered the room, having taken the lodgings of their parents in a morning walk, on which they were regularly sent by the mistress of the boarding-school, in which they were receiving what was then thought to be a first-rate American female education. And much reason had their fond parents to be proud of them! Beulah, the eldest, was just eleven, while her sister was eighteen months younger. The first had a staid, and yet a cheerful look; but her cheeks were blooming, her eyes bright, and her smile sweet. Maud, the adopted one, however, had already the sunny countenance of an angel, with quite as much of the appearance of health as her sister; her face had more finesse, her looks more intelligence, her playfulness more feeling, her smile more tenderness, at times; at others, more meaning. It is scarcely necessary to say that both had that delicacy of outline which seems almost inseparable from the female form in this country. What was, perhaps, more usual in that day among persons of their class than it is in our own, each spoke her own language with an even, graceful utterance, and a faultless accuracy of pronunciation, equally removed from effort and provincialism. As the Dutch was in very common use then at Albany, and most females of Dutch origin had a slight touch of their mother tongue in their enunciation of English, this purity

of dialect in the two girls was to be ascribed to the fact that their father was an Englishman by birth; their mother an American of purely English origin, though named after a Dutch god-mother; and the head of the school in which they had now been three years was a native of London, and a lady by habits and education.

"Now, Maud," cried the captain, after he had kissed the forehead, eyes, and cheeks of his smiling little favorite—"Now, Maud, I will set you to guess what good news I have for you and Beulah."

"You and mother don't mean to go to that bad Beaver Manor this summer, as some call the ugly pond?" answered the child, quick as lightning.

"That is kind of you, my darling; more kind than prudent; but you are not right."

"Try Beulah, now," interrupted the mother, who, while she, too, doted on her youngest child, had an increasing respect for the greater solidity and better judgment of her sister: "let us hear Beulah's guess."

"It is something about my brother, I know by my mother's eyes," answered the eldest girl, looking inquiringly into Mrs. Willoughby's face.

"Oh! yes," cried Maud, beginning to jump about the room, until she ended her saltations in her father's arms—"Bob has got his commission!—I know it all well enough, now—I would not thank you to tell me—I know it all now—*dear* Bob, how he *will* laugh! and how happy I am!"

"Is it so, mother?" asked Beulah, anxiously, and without even a smile.

"Maud is right; Bob is an ensign—or will be one in a day or two. You do not seem pleased, my child?"

"I wish Robert were not a soldier, mother. Now he will be always away, and we shall never see him; then he may be obliged to fight, and who knows how unhappy it may make him?"

Beulah thought more of her brother than she did of herself; and, sooth to say, her mother had many of the child's misgivings. With Maud it was altogether different; she saw only the bright side of the picture; Bob gay and brilliant, his face covered with smiles, his appearance admired, himself, and of course his sisters, happy. Captain Willoughby sympathized altogether with his pet. Accustomed to arms, he rejoiced that a career in which he had partially failed—this he did not conceal from himself or his wife—that this same career had opened, as he trusted, with better auspices on his only son. He covered Maud with kisses, and then rushed from the house, finding his heart too full to run the risk of being unmanned in the presence of females.

A week later, availing themselves of one of the last falls of snow of the season, Captain Willoughby and his wife left Albany for the Knoll. The leave-taking was tender, and, to the parents, bitter; though, after all, it was known that little more than a hundred miles would separate them from their beloved daughters. Fifty of these miles, however, were absolutely wilderness; and to achieve them, quite a hundred of tangled forest, or of difficult navigation, were to be passed. The communications would be at considerable intervals, and difficult. Still they might be held, and the anxious mother left many injunctions with Mrs. Waring, the head of the school, in relation to the health of her daughters, and the manner in which she was to be sent for, in the event of any serious illness.

Mrs. Willoughby had often overcome, as she fancied, the difficulties of a wilderness, in the company of her husband. It is the fashion highly to extol Napoleon's passage of the Alps, simply in reference to its physical obstacles. There never was a brigade moved twenty-four hours into the American wilds that had not greater embarrassments of this nature to overcome, unless in those cases in which favorable river navigation has offered its facilities. Still, time and necessity had made a sort of military ways to all the important frontier points occupied by the British garrisons, and the experience of Mrs. Willoughby had not hitherto been of the severe character of that she was now compelled to undergo.

The first fifty miles were passed over in a sleigh, in a few hours, and with little or no personal fatigue. This brought the travelers to a Dutch inn on the Mohawk, where the captain had often made his halts, and whither he had, from time to time, sent his advanced parties in the course of the winter and spring. Here a jumper was found prepared to receive Mrs. Willoughby; and the horse being led by the captain himself, a passage through the forest was effected as far as the head of the Otsego. The distance being about twelve miles, it required two days for its performance. As the settlements extended south from the Mohawk a few miles, the first night was passed in a log cabin on the extreme verge of civilization, if civilization it could be called, and the remaining eight miles were got over in the course of the succeeding day. This was more than would probably have been achieved in the virgin forest, and under the circumstances, had not so many of the captain's people passed over the same ground, going and returning, thereby learning how to avoid the greatest difficulties of the route, and here and there constructing a rude bridge. They had also blazed the trees, shortening the road by pointing out its true direction.

At the head of the Otsego, our adventurers were fairly in the wilderness. Huts had been built to receive the travelers, and here the whole party assembled, in readiness to make a fresh start in company. It consisted of more than a dozen persons, in all; the black domestics of the family being present, as well as several mechanics whom Captain Willoughby had employed to carry on his improvements. The men sent in advance had not been idle, any more than those left at the Hutted Knoll. They had built three or four skiffs, one small batteau, and a couple of canoes. These were all in the water, in waiting for the disappearance of the ice, which was now reduced to a mass of stalactites, but clear and bright when separated and exposed to the sun. The south winds began to prevail, and the shore was glittering with the fast-melting piles of the frozen fluid, though it would have been vain yet to attempt a passage through it.

The Otsego is a sheet that we have taken more than one occasion to describe, and the picture it then presented, amidst its frame of mountains, will readily be imagined by most of our readers. In 1765, no sign of a settlement was visible on its shores, few of the grants of land in that vicinity extending back so far. Still the spot began to be known; and hunters had been in the habit of frequenting its bosom and its shores for the last twenty years or more. Not a vestige of their presence, however, was to be seen from the huts of the captain; but Mrs. Willoughby assured her husband, as she stood leaning on his arm, the morning after her arrival, that never before had she gazed on so eloquent, and yet so pleasing, a picture of solitude as that which lay spread before her eyes.

"There is something encouraging and soothing in this bland south wind, too," she added, "which seems to promise that we shall meet with a beneficent nature in the spot to which we are going. The south airs of spring to me are always filled with promise."

"And justly, love; for they are the harbingers of a renewed vegetation. If the wind increase, as I think it may, we shall see this chilling sheet of ice succeeded by the more cheerful view of water. It is in this way that all these lakes open their bosoms in April."

Captain Willoughby did not know it while speaking, but at that moment quite two miles of the lower or southern end of the lake were clear, and the opening giving a sweep to the breeze, the latter was already driving the sheets of ice before it toward the head, at a rate of quite a mile in the hour. Just then, an Irishman, named Michael O'Hearn, who had recently arrived in America, and whom the captain had hired as a servant of all work, came rushing up to his master, and opened his teeming thoughts with an earnestness of manner, and a confusion of rhetoric, that were equally characteristic of the man and of a portion of his nation.

"Is it journeying south, or to the other end of this bit of wather, or ice, that yer

honor is thinking of?" he cried. "Well, and there'll be room for us all, and to spare; for divil a bir-r-d will be left in that quarter by night, or forenent twelve o'clock either, calculating by the clock, if one had such a thing, as a body might say."

As this was said not only vehemently, but with an accent that defies imitation with the pen, Mrs. Willoughby was quite at a loss to get a clew to the idea; but her husband, more accustomed to men of Mike's class, was sufficiently lucky to comprehend what he was at.

"You mean the pigeons, Mike, I suppose," the captain answered, good-humoredly. "There are certainly a goodly number of them; and I dare say our hunters will bring us in some for dinner. It is a certain sign that the winter is gone, when birds and beasts follow their instincts in this manner. Where are you from, Mike?"

"County Leitrim, yer honor," answered the other, touching his cap.

"Aye, that one may guess," said the captain, smiling, "but where last?"

"From looking at the bir-r-ds, sir! Och! It's a sight that will do madam good, and contains a sartainty there'll be room enough made for us where all these cr'atures came from. I'm thinking, yer honor, if we don't ate *them*, they'll be wanting to ate *us*. What a power of them, counting big and little; though they're all of a size, just as much as if they had flown through a hole made on purpose to kape them down to a convanient bigness, in body and feathers."

"Such a flight of pigeons in Ireland would make a sensation, Mike," observed the captain, willing to amuse his wife by drawing out the County Leitrim man a little.

"It would make a dinner, yer honor, for every mother's son of 'em, counting the gur-r-rls in the bargain! Such a power of bir-r-ds would knock down praties in a wonderful degree, and even make butthermilk chape and plenthiful. Will it be always such abundance with us down at the Huts, yer honor? or is this sight only a delusion to fill us with hopes that's never to be satisfied."

"Pigeons are seldom wanting in this country, Mike, in the spring and autumn; though we have both birds and beasts in plenty, that are preferable for food."

"Will it be plenthier than this? Well, it's enough to destroy human appetite the sight of 'em! I'd give the half joe I lost among them blackguards in Albany at their Pauss, as they calls it, jist to let my sister's childer have their supper out of one of these flocks, such as they are, betther or no betther. Och! it is pleasant to think of them childer having their will, for once, on such a power of wild, savage bir-r-ds!"

Captain Willoughby smiled at this proof of *naïveté* in his new domestic, and then led his wife back to the hut; it being time to make some fresh dispositions for the approaching movement. By noon it became apparent to those who were waiting such an event, that the lake was opening; and, about the same time, one of the hunters came in from a neighboring mountain, and reported that he had seen clear water as near their position as three or four miles. By this time it was blowing fresh, and the wind having a clear rake, drove up the honeycomb-looking sheet before it, as the scraper accumulates snow. When the sun set, the whole north shore was white with piles of glittering icicles; while the bosom of the Otsego, no longer disturbed by the wind, resembled a placid mirror.

Early on the following morning the whole party embarked. There was no wind, and men were placed at the paddles and the oars. Care was taken on quitting the huts to close their doors and shutters; for they were to be taverns to cover the heads of many a traveler in their frequent journeys that were likely to be made between the Knoll and the settlements. These stations, then, were of the last importance, and a frontier-man always had the same regard for them that the mountaineer of the Alps has for his "refuge."

The passage down the Otsego was the easiest and most agreeable portion of the whole journey. The day was pleasant and the oarsmen vigorous, if not very skillful, rendering the movement rapid and

sufficiently direct. But one drawback occurred to the prosperity of the voyage. Among the laborers hired by the captain was a Connecticut man by the name of Joel Strides, between whom and the County Leitrim man there had early commenced a warfare of tricks and petty annoyances—a warfare that was perfectly defensive on the part of O'Hearn, who did little more in the way of retort than to comment on the long, lank, shapeless figure and meager countenance of his enemy. Joel had not been seen to smile since he engaged with the captain, though three times had he laughed outright, and each time at the occurrence of some mishap to Michael O'Hearn, the fruit of one of his own schemes of annoyance.

On the present occasion, Joel, who had the distribution of such duty, placed Mike in a skiff by himself, flattering the poor fellow with the credit he would achieve by rowing a boat to the foot of the lake without assistance. He might as well have asked Mike to walk to the outlet on the surface of the water! This arrangement proceeded from an innate love of mischief in Joel, who had much of the quiet waggery, blended with many of the bad qualities of the men of his peculiar class. A narrow and conceited selfishness lay at the root of the larger portion of this man's faults. As a physical being, he was a perfect labor-saving machine himself; bringing all the resources of a naturally quick and acute mind to bear on this one end, never doing anything that required a particle more than the exertion and strength that were absolutely necessary to effect his object. He rowed the skiff in which the captain and his wife had embarked with his own hands; and previously to starting, he had selected the best sculls from the other boats, had fitted his thwart with the closest attention to his own ease, and had placed a stretcher for his feet, with an intelligence and knowledge of mechanics that would have done credit to a Whitehall waterman. This much proceeded from the predominating principle of his nature, which was always to have an eye on the interest of Joel Strides; though the effect happened in this instance to be beneficial to those he served.

Michael O'Hearn, on the contrary, thought only of the end; and this so intensely, not to say vehemently, as generally to overlook the means. Frank, generous, self-devoted, and withal accustomed to get most things wrong-end-foremost, he usually threw away twice the same labor, in effecting a given purpose, that was expended by the Yankee; doing the thing worse, too, besides losing twice the time. He never paused to think of this, however. The *mashter's* boat was to be rowed to the other end of the lake, and though he had never rowed a boat an inch in his life, he was ready and willing to undertake the job. "If a certain quantity of work will do it," thought Mike, "I'll try as much ag'in; and the divil is in it if *that* won't sarve the purpose of that little job."

Under such circumstances the party started. Most of the skiffs and canoes went off half an hour before Mrs. Willoughby was ready, and Joel managed to keep Mike for the last, under the pretense of wishing his aid in loading his own boat with the bed and bedding from the hut. All was ready at length, and taking his seat with a sort of quiet deliberation, Joel said, in his drawling way, "You'll follow *us*, Mike, and you can't be a thousand miles out of the way." Then he pulled from the shore with a quiet, steady stroke of the sculls, and sent the skiff ahead with great rapidity, though with much ease to himself.

Michael O'Hearn stood looking at the retiring skiff in silent admiration for two or three minutes. He was quite alone; for all the other boats were already two or three miles on their way, and distance already prevented him from seeing the mischief that was lurking in Joel's hypocritical eyes.

"Follow *yees!*" soliloquized Mike. "The divil burn ye, for a guessing Yankee as ye ar'—how am I to follow with such legs as the like of these? If it wasn't for the masther and the missus, ra'al jontlemen and ladies they be, I'd turn my back on ye in the desert, and let ye find that Beaver estate, in yer own disagreeable

company. Ha!—well, I must thry, and if the boat won't go, it will be no fault of the man that has a good disposition to make it."

Mike now took his seat on a board that lay across the gunwale of the skiff at a most inconvenient height, placed two skulls in the water, one of which was six inches longer than the other, made a desperate effort, and got his craft fairly afloat. Now, Michael O'Hearn was not left-handed, and, as usually happens with such men, the inequality between the two limbs was quite marked. By a sinister accident, too, it happened that the longest oar got into the strongest hand, and there it would have stayed to the end of time, before Mike would think of changing it on that account. Joel alone sat with his face toward the head of the lake, and he alone could see the dilemma in which the County Leitrim man was placed. Neither the captain nor his wife thought of looking behind, and the Yankee had all the fun to himself.

As for Mike, he succeeded in getting a few rods from the land, when the strong arm and the longer lever asserting their superiority, the skiff began to incline to the westward. So intense, however, was the poor fellow's zeal, that he did not discover the change in his course until he had so far turned as to give him a glimpse of his retiring master; then he inferred that all was right, and pulled more leisurely. The result was that in about ten minutes Mike was stopped by the land, the boat touching the north shore again, two or three rods from the very point whence it had started. The honest fellow got up, looked around him, scratched his head, gazed wistfully after the fast receding boat of his master, and broke out in another soliloquy.

"Bad luck to them that made ye, ye one-sided thing!" he said, shaking his head reproachfully at the skiff; "there's liberty for ye to do as ye ought, and ye'll not be doing it, just out of contrairiness. Why the divil can't ye do like the other skiffs and go where ye're wanted, on the road toward thim beavers? Och, ye'll be sorry for this when ye're left behind out of sight!"

Then it flashed on Mike's mind that possibly some article had been left in the hut, and the skiff had come back to look after it. So, up he ran to the captain's deserted lodge, entered it, was lost to view for a minute, then came in sight again, scratching his head and renewing his muttering—

"No," he said, "divil a thing can I see, and it must be pure con*trair*iness! Perhaps the baste will behave better next time—so I'll try it ag'in and give it an occasion. Barring obstinacy, 'tis as good-looking a skiff as the best of them."

Mike was as good as his word, and gave the skiff as fair an opportunity of behaving itself as was ever offered to a boat. Seven times did he quit the shore, and as often return to it, gradually working his way toward the western shore, and slightly down the lake. In this manner, Mike at length got himself so far on the side of the lake as to present a barrier of land to the evil disposition of his skiff to incline to the westward. It could go no longer in that direction at least.

"Divil burn ye," the honest fellow cried, the perspiration rolling down his face; "I think ye'll be satisfied without walking out into the forest, where I wish ye war' with all my heart, among the threes that made ye! Now, I'll see if yer con*trair*y enough to run up hill."

Mike next essayed to pull along the shore, in the hope that the sight of the land, and of the overhanging pines and hemlocks, would cure the boat's propensity to turn in that direction. It is not necessary to say that his expectations were disappointed, and he was finally reduced to getting out into the water, cool as was the weather, and of wading along the shore, dragging the boat after him. All this Joel saw before he passed out of sight, but no movement of his muscles let the captain into the secret of the poor Irishman's strait.

In the meanwhile, the rest of the flotilla, or brigade of boats, as the captain termed them, went prosperously on their way, going from one end of the lake to the other in the course of three hours. As one of the party had been over the route

several times already, there was no hesitation on the subject of the point to which the boats were to proceed. They all touched the shore near the stone that is now called the "Otsego Rock," beneath a steep wooded bank, and quite near to the place where the Susquehannah glanced out of the lake in a swift current, beneath a high arched tracery of branches that were not yet clothed with leaves.

Here the question was put as to what had become of Mike. His skiff was nowhere visible, and the captain felt the necessity of having him looked for before he proceeded any further. After a short consultation, a boat manned by two negroes, father and son, named Pliny the elder and Pliny the younger, or, in common parlance, "old Plin" and "young Plin," was sent back along the west shore to hunt him up. Of course a hut was immediately prepared for the reception of Mrs. Willoughby, upon the plain that stretches across the valley at this point. This was on the site of the present village of Cooperstown, but just twenty years anterior to the commencement of the pretty little shire town that now exists on the spot.

It was night ere the two Plinies appeared towing Mike, as their great namesakes of antiquity might have brought in a Carthaginian galley, in triumph. The County Leitrim man had made his way with excessive toil about a league ere he was met, and glad enough was he to see his succor approach. In that day, the strong antipathy which now exists between the black and the emigrant Irishman was unknown, the competition for household services commencing more than half a century later. Still, as the negro loved fun constitutionally, and Pliny the younger was somewhat of a wag, Mike did not entirely escape scot-free.

"Why you drag 'im like ox, Irish Mike?" cried the younger negro. "Why you no row 'im like other folk?"

"Ah! you're as bad as the rest of 'em," growled Mike. "They tould me Ameriky was a mighty warm country, and war-r-m I find it, sure enough, though the wather isn't as warm as good whisky. Come, ye black divils, and see if ye can coax this con*trair*y cr'athure to do as a person wants."

The negroes soon had Mike in tow, and then they went down the lake merrily, laughing and cracking their jokes at the Irishman's expense, after the fashion of their race. It was fortunate for the Leitrim man that he was accustomed to ditching, though it may be questioned if the pores of his body closed again that day, so very effectually had they been opened. When he rejoined his master, not a syllable was said of the mishap, Joel having the prudence to keep his own secret, and even joining Mike in denouncing the bad qualities of the boat. We will only add here, that a little calculation entered into this trick, Joel perceiving that Mike was a favorite, and wishing to bring him into disgrace.

Early the next morning the captain sent the negroes and Mike down the Susquehannah a mile, to clear away some flood-wood, of which one of the hunters had brought in a report the preceding day. Two hours later the boats left shore, and began to float downward with the current, following the direction of a stream that has obtained its name from its sinuosities.

In a few minutes the boats reached the flood-wood, where, to Joe's great amusement, Mike and the negroes—the latter having little more calculation than the former—had commenced their operations on the upper side of the raft, piling the logs upon one another, with a view to make a passage through the center. Of course there was a halt, the females landing. Captain Willoughby now cast an eye round him in hesitation, when a knowing look from Joel caught his attention.

"This does not seem to be right," he said. "Cannot we better it a little?"

"It's right wrong, captain," answered Joe, laughing like one who enjoyed other people's ignorance. "A sensible crittur' would begin the work on such a job at the lower side of the raft."

"Take the direction, and order things to suit yourself."

This was just what Joel liked. *Head*-work before all other work for him, and he set about the duty authoritatively and with promptitude. After rating the negroes roundly for their stupidity, and laying it on Mike without much delicacy of thought or diction, over the shoulders of the two blacks, he mustered his forces and began to clear the channel with intelligence and readiness.

Going to the lower side of the jammed flood-wood, he soon succeeded in loosening one or two trees, which floated away, making room for others to follow. By these means a passage was effected in half an hour, Joel having the prudence to set no more timber in motion than was necessary to his purpose, lest it might choke the stream below. In this manner the party got through, and, the river being high at that season, by night the travelers were half way to the mouth of the Unadilla. The next evening they encamped at the junction of the two streams, making their preparations to ascend the latter the following morning.

The toil of the ascent, however, did not commence until the boats entered what was called the creek, a small tributary of the Unadilla, on which the beavers had erected their works, and which ran through the "Manor." Here, indeed, the progress was slow and laborious, the rapidity of the current and the shallowness of the water rendering every foot gained a work of exertion and pain. Perseverance and skill, notwithstanding, prevailed; all the boats reaching the foot of the rapids, or straggling falls, on which the captain had built his mills, about an hour before the sun disappeared. Here, of course, the boats were left, a rude road having been cut, by means of which the freight was transported on a sled the remainder of the distance. Throughout the whole of this trying day, Joel had not only worked head-work, but he had actually exerted himself with his body. As for Mike, never before had he made such desperate efforts. He felt all the disgrace of his adventure on the lake, and was disposed to wipe it out by his exploits on the rivers. Thus Mike was ever loyal to his employer. He had sold his flesh and blood for money, and a man of his conscience was inclined to give a fair penny's worth. The tractable manner in which the boat had floated down the river, it is true, caused him some surprise, as was shown in his remark to the younger Pliny on landing.

"This is a curious boat, afther all," said Pat. "One time it is all con*trairi*ness, and then ag'in it's as obliging as one's own mother. It followed the day all's one like a puppy dog, while yon on the big wather there was no more dhriving it than a hog. Och! it's a faimale boat, by its whims."

CHAPTER III.

"He sleeps forgetful of his once bright fame,
He has no feeling of the glory gone;
He has no eye to catch the mountain flame
That once in transport drew him on;
He lies in dull oblivious dreams, nor cares
Who the wreathed laurel bears."—PERCIVAL.

THE appearance of a place in which the remainder of one's life is to be passed is always noted with interest on a first visit. Thus it was that Mrs. Willoughby had been observant and silent from the moment the captain informed her that they had passed the line of his estate, and were approaching the spot where they were to dwell. The stream was so small, and the girding of the forest so close, that there was little range for the sight; but the anxious wife and mother could perceive that the hills drew together at this point, the valley narrowing essentially, that rocks began to appear in the bed of the river, and that the growth of the timber indicated fertility and a generous soil.

When the boat stopped, the little stream came brawling down a ragged declivity, and a mill, one so arranged as to grind and saw—both in a very small way, however—gave the first signs of civilization she had beheld since quitting the last hut near the Mohawk. After issuing a few orders, the captain drew his wife's arm through his own and hurried up the ascent with an eagerness that was almost boyish, to show her what had been

done toward the improvement of the "Knoll." There is a pleasure in diving into a virgin forest and commencing the labors of civilization that has no exact parallel in any other human occupation. That of building, or laying out grounds, has certainly some resemblance to it; but it is a resemblance so faint and distant as scarcely to liken the enjoyment each produces. The former approaches nearer to the feeling of creating, and is far more pregnant with anticipations and hopes, though its first effects are seldom agreeable, and are sometimes nearly hideous. Our captain, however, had escaped most of these last consequences by possessing the advantage of having a clearing, without going through the usual processes of chopping and burning; the first of which leaves the earth dotted for many years with unsightly stumps, while the rains and snows do not wash out the hues of the last for several seasons.

An exclamation betrayed the pleasure with which Mrs. Willoughby got her first glimpse of the drained pond. It was when she had clambered to the point of the rocks where the stream began to tumble downward into the valley below. A year had done a vast deal for the place. The few stumps and stubs which had disfigured the basin when it was first laid bare had all been drawn by oxen and burned. This left the entire surface of the four hundred acres smooth and fit for the plow. The soil was the deposit of centuries, and the inclination from the woods to the stream was scarcely perceptible to the eye. In fact, it was barely sufficient to drain the drippings of the winter's snows. The form of the area was a little irregular; just enough so to be picturesque; while the inequalities were surprisingly few and trifling. In a word, Nature had formed just such a spot as delights the husbandman's heart, and placed it beneath a sun which, while its fierceness is relieved by winters of frost and snow, has a power to bring out all its latent resources.

Trees had been felled around the whole area, with the open spaces filled by branches, in a way to form what is termed a brush fence. This is not a sightly object, and the captain had ordered the line to be drawn within the woods, so that the visible boundaries of the open land were the virgin forest itself. His men had protested against this, a fence, however unseemly, being in their view an indispensable accessory to civilization. But the captain's authority, if not his better taste, prevailed; and the boundary of felled trees and brush was completely concealed in the background of woods. As yet there was no necessity for cross-fences, the whole open space lying in a single field. One hundred acres were in winter wheat. As this grain had been got in the previous autumn, it was now standing on the finest and dryest of the soil, giving an air of rich fertility to the whole basin. Grass-seed had been sown along both banks of the stream, and its waters were quietly flowing between two wide belts of fresh verdure, the young plants having already started in that sheltered receptacle of the sun's rays. Other portions of the flat showed signs of improvement, the plow having actually been at work for quite a fortnight.

All this was far more than even the captain had expected, and much more than his wife had dared to hope. Mrs. Willoughby had been accustomed to witness the slow progress of a new settlement; but never before had she seen what might be done on a beaver-dam. To her, all appeared like magic, and her first question would have been to ask her husband to explain what had been done with the trees and stumps, had not her future residence caught her eye. Captain Willoughby had left his orders concerning the house previously to quitting the Knoll; and he was now well pleased to perceive that they had been attended to. As this spot will prove the scene of many of the incidents we are bound to relate, it may be proper here to describe it at some length.

The hillock that rose out of the pond, in the form of a rocky little island, was one of those capricious formations that are often met with on the surface of the earth. It stood about thirty rods from the northern side of the area, very nearly central as to its eastern and western boundaries,

and presented a slope inclining toward the south. Its greatest height was at its northern end, where it rose out of the rich alluvion of the soil literally a rock of some forty feet in perpendicular height, having a summit of about an acre of level land, and falling off on its three sides; to the east and west precipitously; to the south quite gently and with regularity. It was this accidental formation which had induced the captain to select the spot as the site of his residence; for dwelling so far from any post, and in a place so difficult of access, something like military defenses were merely precautions of ordinary prudence. While the pond remained the islet was susceptible of being made very strong against any of the usual assaults of Indian warfare; and, now that the basin was drained, it had great advantages for the same purpose. The perpendicular rock to the north even overhung the plain. It was almost inaccessible; while the formation on the other sides offered singular facilities both for a dwelling and for security. All this the captain, who was so familiar with the finesse of Indian stratagem, had resolved to improve in the following manner:

In the first place he directed the men to build a massive wall of stone, for a hundred and fifty feet in length, and six feet in height. This stretched in front of the perpendicular rock, with receding walls to its verge. The latter were about two hundred feet in length, each. This was inclosing an area of two hundred by one hundred and fifty feet, within a blind wall of masonry. Through this wall there was only a single passage; a gateway in the center of its southern face. The materials had all been found on the hill itself, which was well covered with heavy stones. Within this wall, which was substantially laid by a Scotch mason, one accustomed to the craft, the men had erected a building of massive squared pine timber, well secured by cross partitions. This building followed the wall in its whole extent, was just fifteen feet in elevation without the roof, and was composed in part by the wall itself; the latter forming nearly one-half its height on the exterior. The breadth of this edifice was only twenty feet, clear of the stones and wood-work; leaving a court within of about one hundred by one hundred and seventy-five in extent. The roof extended over the gateway even; so that the space within was completely covered, the gates being closed. This much had been done during the preceding fall and winter; the edifice presenting an appearance of rude completeness on the exterior. Still it had a somber and jail-like air; there being nothing resembling a window visible; no aperture, indeed, on either side of its outer faces, but the open gateway, of which the massive leaves were finished and placed against the adjacent walls, but which were not yet hung. It is scarcely necessary to say this house resembled barracks more than an ordinary dwelling. Mrs. Willoughby stood gazing at it, half in doubt whether to admire or to condemn, when a voice within a few yards suddenly drew her attention in another direction.

"How you like him?" asked Nick, who was seated on a stone at the margin of the stream, washing his feet after a long day's hunt. "No t'ink him better dan beaver skin? Cap'in know all 'bout him; now he give Nick some more last quit-rent."

"Last, indeed, it will be, then, Nick; for I have already paid you twice for your rights."

"Discovery wort' great deal, cap'in—see what great man he make pale-face."

"Aye, but your discovery, Nick, is not of that sort."

"What sort, den?" demanded Nick, with the rapidity of lightning. "Give him back'e beaver if you no like he discovery. Grad to see 'em back again; skin higher price dan ever."

"Nick, you're a cormorant, if there ever was one in this world! Here—there is a dollar for you; the quit-rent is paid for this year at least. It ought to be for the last time."

"Let him go for all summer, cap'in. Yes, Nick wonderful cormorant! no such eye he got among Oneida."

Here the Tuscarora left the side of the stream and came up on the rock, shaking

hands good-humoredly with Mrs. Willoughby, who rather liked the knave, though she knew him to possess most of the vices of his class.

"He very han'some beaver dam," said Nick, sweeping his hand gracefully over the view; "bye 'nd bye, he'll bring potato, and corn, and cider—all 'e squaw want. Cap'in got good fort, too. Old soldier love fort; like to live in him."

"The day may come, Nick, when that fort may serve us all a good turn out here in the wilderness," Mrs. Willoughby observed, in a somewhat melancholy tone; for her tender thoughts naturally turned toward her youthful and innocent daughters.

The Indian gazed at the house with that fierce intentness which sometimes glared, in a manner that had got to be, in its ordinary aspects, dull and besotted. There was a startling intelligence in his eye at such moments; the feelings of youth and earlier habit once more asserting their power. Twenty years before Nick had been foremost on the war-path; and what was scarcely less honorable, among the wisest around the council-fire. He was born a chief, and had made himself an outcast from his tribe more by the excess of ungovernable passions, than from any act of base meanness.

"Cap'in tell Nick, now, what he mean by building such house out here among ole beaver bones?" he said, sidling up nearer to his employer, and gazing with some curiosity into his face.

"What do I mean, Nick?—Why I mean to have a place of safety to put the heads of my wife and children in at need. The road to Canada is not so long but a redskin can make one pair of moccasins go over it. Then the Oneidas and Mohawks are not all children of heaven."

"No pale-face rogue go about, I s'pose?" said Nick, sarcastically.

"Yes, there are men of that class who are none the worse for being locked out of one's house at times. But what do you think of the hut?—You know I call the place the 'Hut,' the Hutted Knoll."

"He hole plenty of beaver if you cotch him!—But no water left, and he all go away. Why you make him stone, first; den you make him wood, a'ter; eh? Plenty rock; plenty tree."

"Why, the stone wall can neither be cut away nor set fire to, Nick; that's the reason. I took as much stone as was necessary, and then used wood, which is more easily worked, and which is also drier."

"Good—Nick t'ought just dat. How you get him water if Injen come?"

"There's the stream that winds round the foot of the hill, Nick, as you see; and there is a delicious spring within one hundred yards of the very gate."

"Which side of him?" asked Nick, with his startling rapidity.

"Why, here, to the left of the gate, and a little to the right of the large stone——"

"No—no," interrupted the Indian, "no left—no right—which side—inside gate; outside gate?"

"Oh!—the spring is outside the gate, certainly; but means might be found to make a covered way to it; and then the stream winds round directly underneath the rocks behind the house, and water could be raised from that by means of a rope. Our rifles would count for something, too, in drawing water as well as in drawing blood."

"Good—Rifle got long arm. He talk so, Ingin mind him. When you t'ink redskin come agin your fort, cap'in, now you got him done?"

"A long time first, I hope, Nick. We are at peace with France again; and I see no prospect of any new quarrel very soon. So long as the French and English are at peace, the redmen will not dare to touch either."

"Dat true as missionary. What a soldier do, cap'in, if so much peace? Warrior love war-path."

"I wish it were not so, Nick. But my hatchet is buried I hope forever."

"Nick hope cap'in know where to find him if he want to? Very bad to put any-t'ing where he forget; partic'larly tomahawk. Sometime quarrel come like rain, when you don't t'ink."

"Yes, that also cannot be denied. Yet I fear the next quarrel will be among our-

selves, Nick. The government at home and the people of the colonies are getting to have bad blood between them."

"Dat very queer! Why pale-face moder and pale-face darter no love one anoder, like red skin?"

"Really, Nick, you are somewhat interrogating this evening; but my squaw must be a little desirous of seeing the inside of her house as well as its outside, and I must refer you to that honest fellow yonder for an answer. His name is Mike; I hope he and you will always be good friends."

So saying, the captain nodded in a friendly manner, and led Mrs. Willoughby toward the hut, taking a foot-path that was already trodden firm, and which followed the sinuosities of the stream to which it served as a sort of a dyke. Nick took the captain at his word, and turning about, he met the County Leitrim man with an air of great blandness, thrusting out a hand in the pale-face fashion, as a sign of amity, saying at the same time—

"How do, Mike?—Sago—Sago—grad you come. Good fellow to drink Santa Cruz wid Nick."

"How do, Mike!" exclaimed the other, looking at the Tuscarora with astonishment; for this was positively the first redman the Irishman had ever seen. "How do, Mike? Ould Nick be ye? Well, you look pretty much as I expected to see you. Pray, how did you come to know my name?"

"Nick know him—know everyt'ing. Grad to see you, Mike. Hope we live together like good friend, down yonder, up here, over dere."

"Ye do, do ye! Divil burn me, now, if I want any sich company. Ould Nick's yer name, is it?"

"Old Nick—young Nick—saucy Nick; all one, all to'ther. Make no odd what ye call. I come."

"Och, yer a handy one! Divil trust ye, but ye'll come when you arn't wanted, or yer not of yer father's own family. D'ye live hereabouts, masther Ould Nick?"

"Live here—out yonder—in he hut, in he wood—where he want. Make no difference to Nick."

Michael now drew back a pace or two, keeping his eyes fastened on the other intently; for he actually expected to see some prodigious and sudden change in his appearance. When he thought he had got a good position for manly defense or rapid retreat, as either might become necessary, the County Leitrim man put on a bolder front and resumed the discourse.

"If it's so indifferent to ye where ye dwell," asked Mike, "why can't you keep at home, and let a body carry these cloaks and bundles of missuses out yonder to the house whither she's gone?"

"Nick help carry 'em. Carry t'ing for dat squaw hundred time."

"That what! D'ye mane Madam Willoughby by yer blackguard name?"

"Yes; cap'in wife—cap'in squaw, mean him. Carry bundle, basket, hundred time for him."

"The Lord preserve me, now, from sich atrocity and impudence!" laying down the cloaks and bundles, and facing the Indian with an appearance of great indignation. "Did a body ever hear such a liar! Why Misther Ould Nick, Madam Willoughby wouldn't let the likes of ye touch the ind of her garments. You would'nt get the liberty to walk in the same path with her—much less to carry her bundles. I'll answer for it, ye're a great liar, now, Ould Nick, in the bottom of your heart."

"Nick great liar," answered the Indian, good-naturedly; for he so well knew this was his common reputation, that he saw no use in denying it. "What of dat? Lie good sometime."

"That's another! Oh, ye animal, I've a great mind to set upon ye at once, and see what an honest man can do vid ye in fair fight! If I only knew what ye'd got about yer toes, now, under them fine looking things ye wear for shoes, once, I'd taich ye to talk of the missis in this style."

"Speak as well as he know how. Nick never been to school. Call 'e squaw—good squaw. What want more?"

"Get out! If you come a foot nearer, I'll be at ye, like a dog upon a bull, though ye gore me. What brought ye into this paiceful settlement, where nothing but

virtue and honesty have taken up their abode?"

What more Mike might have said is not known, as Nick caught a sign from the captain and went loping across the flat at his customary gait, leaving the Irishman standing on the defensive, and to own the truth, not sorry to be rid of him. Unfortunately for the immediate enlightenment of Mike's mind, Joel overheard the dialogue, and comprehending its meaning with his native readiness, he joined his companion in a mood but little disposed to clear up the error.

"Did ye see that crathure?" asked Mike, with emphasis.

"Sartin—he is often seen here, at the Hut. He may be said to live here half his time."

"A pritty hut, then, ye must have of it! Why do ye tolerate the vagabond? He's not fit for Christian society."

"Oh! he's good company sometimes, Mike. When you know him better you'll like him better. Come; up with the bundles, and let us follow. The captain is looking after us, as you see."

"Well may he look, to see us in sich company! Will he har-r-m the missus?"

"Not he. I tell you, you'll like him yourself when you come to know him."

"If I do, burn me! Why, he says himself that he's Ould Nick, and I'm sure I never fancied the crathure but it was in just some such for-r-m. Och! he's ill looking enough for twenty Ould Nicks."

Lest the reader get an exaggerated notion of Michael's credulity, it may be well to say that Nick had painted a few days before, in a fit of caprice, and that one-half of his face was black, and the other a deep red, while each of his eyes was surrounded with a circle of white, all of which had got to be a little confused in consequence of a night or two of orgies, succeeded by mornings in which the toilet had been altogether neglected. His dress, too, a blanket with tawdry red and yellow trimmings, with ornamented leggings and moccasins to correspond, had all aided in maintaining the accidental mystification. Mike followed his companion, growling out his discontent, and watching the form of the Indian, as the latter still went loping over the flat, having passed the captain, with a message to the barns.

"I'll warrant ye, now, the captain wouldn't tolerate such a crathure, but he's sent him off to the woods, as ye may see, like a divil as he is! To think of such a thing's spaking to the missus! Will I fight him? That will I, rather than he'll say an uncivil word to the likes of her! He's claws, they tell me, though he kapes them so well covered in his fine brogues; divil burn me, but I'd grapple him by the toes."

Joel now saw how deep was Michael's delusion, and knowing it must soon be over, he determined to make a merit of necessity, by letting his friend into the truth, thereby creating a confidence that would open the way to a hundred future mischievous scenes.

"Claws!" he repeated, with an air of surprise. "And why do you think an Injin has claws, Mike?"

"An Injin! D'ye call that miscolored crathure an Injin, Joel? Isn't it one of yer Yankee divils?"

"Out upon you, for an Irish ninny. Do you think the captain would board a divil? The fellow's a Tuscarora, and is as well known here as the owner of the Hut himself. It's Saucy Nick."

"Yes, saucy Ould Nick—I had it from his very mout', and even the divil would hardly be such a blackguard as to lie about his own name. Och! he's a roarer, sure enough; and then for the tusks you mintion, I didn't see 'em with my eyes; but the crathure has a mouth that might hold a basket-full."

Joel now perceived that he must go more seriously to work to undeceive his companion. Mike honestly believed he had met an American devil, and it required no little argumentation to persuade him of the contrary. We shall leave Joel employed in this difficult task, in which he finally succeeded, and follow the captain and his wife to the Hut.

The lord and lady of the manor examined everything around their future residence with curious eyes. Jamie Allen, the Scotch mason mentioned, was stand-

ing in front of the house, to hear what might be said of his wall, while two or three other mechanics betrayed some such agitation as the tyro in literature manifests, ere he learns what the critics have said of his first work. The exterior gave great satisfaction to the captain. The wall was not only solid and secure, but it was really handsome. This was in some measure owing to the quality of the stones, but quite as much to Jamie's dexterity in using them. The wall and chimneys, of the latter of which there were no less than six, were all laid in lime, too; it having been found necessary to burn some of the material to plaster the interior. Then the gates were massive, being framed in oak, filled in with four-inch plank, and might have resisted a very formidable assault. Their strong iron hinges were all in their places, but the heavy job of hanging had been deferred to a leisure moment, when all the strength of the manor might be collected for that purpose. There they stood, inclining against the wall, one on each side of the gateway, like indolent sentinels on post, who feit too secure from attack to raise their eyes.

The different mechanics crowded round the captain, each eager to show his own portion of what had been done. The winter had not been wasted, but proper materials being in abundance, and on the spot, Captain Willoughby had every reason to be satisfied with what he got for his money. Completely shut out from the rest of the world, the men had worked cheerfully, and with little interruption, for their labors composed their recreation. Mrs. Willoughby found the part of the building her family was to occupy, with the usual offices, done and furnished. This comprised all the front on the eastern side of the gateway, and most of the wing in the same half, extending back to the cliff. It is true, the finish was plain, but everything was comfortable. The ceilings were only ten feet high, certainly, but it was thought prodigious in the colony in that day; and then the plastering of Jamie was by no means as unexceptionable as his stone-work; still every room had its two coats, and whitewash gave them a clean and healthful aspect. The end of the wing that came next to the cliff was a laundry, and a pump was fitted, by means of which water was raised from the rivulet. Next came the kitchen, a spacious and comfortable room of thirty by twenty feet; an upper servant's apartment succeeded; after which were the bedrooms of the family, a large parlor, and a library or office for the captain. As the entire range on this particular side of the house extended nearly or quite two hundred and fifty feet, there was no want of space or accommodation.

The opposite or western half of the edifice was devoted to more homely uses. It contained an eating-room and divers sleeping-rooms for the domestics and laborers, besides store-rooms, garners, and *omnium gatherums* of all sorts. The vast ranges of garrets, too, answered for various purposes of household and farming economy. All the windows and sundry doors opened into the court, while the whole of the exterior wall, both wooden and stone, presented a perfect blank, in the way of outlets. It was the captain's intention, however, to cut divers loops through the logs, at some convenient moment, so that men stationed in the garrets might command the different faces of the structure with their musketry. But, like the gates, these means of defense were laid aside for a more favorable opportunity.

Our excellent matron was delighted with her domestic arrangements. They much surpassed any of the various barracks in which she had dwelt, and a smile of happiness beamed on her handsome face, as she followed her husband from room to room, listening to his explanations. When they entered the private apartments, and these were furnished ready to receive them, respect caused the rest to leave them by themselves, and once more they found that they were alone.

"Well, Wilhelmina," asked the gratified husband—gratified because he saw pleasure beaming in the mild countenance and serene blue eyes of one of the best wives living—"well, Wilhelmina," he asked, "can you give up Albany and all

the comforts of your friends' dwellings to be satisfied in a home like this? It is not probable I shall ever build again, whatever Bob may do when he comes after me. This structure, then—part house, part barrack, part fort, as it is—must be our residence for the remainder of our days. We are hutted for life."

"It is all-sufficient, Willoughby. It has space, comfort, warmth, coolness and security. What more can a wife and a mother ask, when she is surrounded by those she most loves? Only attend to the security, Hugh. Remember how far we are removed from any succor, and how sudden and fierce the Indians are in their attacks. Twice have we ourselves been near being destroyed by surprises, from which accident, or God's providence, protected us, rather than our own vigilance. If this could happen in garrisons and with king's troops around us, how much more easily might it happen here, with only common laborers to watch what is going on?"

"You exaggerate the danger, wife. There are no Indians in this part of the country who would dare to molest a settlement like ours. We count thirteen able-bodied men in all, besides seven women, and could use seventeen or eighteen muskets and rifles on an emergency. No tribe would dare commence hostilities in a time of general peace, and so near the settlements, too; and as to stragglers, who might indeed murder to rob, we are so strong ourselves that we may sleep in peace, so far as they are concerned."

"One never knows that, dearest Hugh. A marauding party of half a dozen might prove too much for many times their own number, when unprepared. I do hope you will have the gates hung, at least; should the girls come here in the autumn, I could not sleep without hanging the gates."

"Fear nothing, love," said the captain, kissing his wife with manly tenderness. "As for Beulah and Maud, let them come when they please; we shall always have a welcome for them, and no place can be safer than under their father's eyes."

"I care not so much for myself, Hugh, but *do* not let the gates be forgotten until the girls come."

"Everything shall be done as you desire, wife of mine, though it will be a hard job to get two such confounded heavy loads of wood on their hinges. We must take some day when everybody is at home, and everybody willing to work. Saturday next I intend to have a review, and once a month, the year round, there will be a muster, when all the arms are to be cleaned and loaded, and orders given how to act in case of an alarm. An old soldier would be disgraced to allow himself to be run down by mere vagabonds. My pride is concerned, and you may sleep in peace."

"Yes, do, dearest Hugh." Then the matron proceeded through the rooms, expressing her satisfaction at the care which had been had for her comfort, in her own rooms in particular.

Sooth to say, the interior of the Hut presented that odd contrast between civilization and rude expedients which so frequently occurs on an American frontier, where persons educated in refinement often find themselves brought in close collision with savage life. Carpets, in America, and in the year of our Lord 1765, were not quite as much a matter of course in domestic economy as they are to-day. Still they were to be found, though it was rare, indeed, that they covered more than the center of the room. One of these great essentials, without which no place can appear comfortable in a cold climate, was spread on the floor of Mrs. Willoughby's parlor—a room that served for both eating and as a sala, the Knight's Hall of the Hut, measuring twenty by twenty-four feet—though in fact this carpet concealed exactly two-thirds of the white, clean plank. Then the chairs were massive, and even rich, while one might see his face in the dark mahogany of the tables. There were cellarets—the captain being a connoisseur in wines—bureaus, secretaries, beaufets, and other similar articles, that had been procured in the course of twenty years' housekeeping, and scattered at different posts, were collected, and brought hither by means of sledges and the facilities of the water-courses. Fashion had

little to do with furniture in that simple age, when the son did not hesitate to wear even the clothes of the father, years and years after the tailor had taken leave of them. Massive old furniture, in particular, lasted for generations; and our matron now saw many articles that had belonged to her grandfather assembled beneath the first roof that she could ever strictly call her own.

Mrs. Willoughby took a survey of the offices last. Here she found already established the two Plinies, with Mari', the sister of the elder Pliny, Bess, the wife of the younger, and Mony—alias Desdemona—a collateral of the race by ties and affinities that garter-king-at-arms could not have traced genealogically, since he would have been puzzled to say whether the woman was the cousin or aunt or stepdaughter of Mari', or all three. All the women were hard at work, Bess singing in a voice that reached the adjoining forest. Mari'—this name was pronounced with a strong emphasis on the last syllable, or like Maria, without the final vowel—Mari' was the head of the kitchen, even Pliny the elder standing in salutary dread of her authority, and her orders to her brother and nephew were pouring forth in an English that was divided into three categories—the Anglo-Saxon, the Low Dutch and the Guinea dialect: a medley that rendered her discourse a droll assemblage of the vulgar and the classical.

"Here, niggers," she cried, "why you don't jump about like Paus dance? Ebbery t'ing want a hand, and some want a foot. Plae to wash, crockery to open, water to b'ile, dem knife to clean, and not'ing missed. Lord, here's a madam, and 'e whole kitchen in a diffusion."

"Well, Mari'," exclaimed the captain, good-naturedly, "here you are, scolding away as if you had been in the place these six months, and knew all its faults and weaknesses."

"Can't help a scold, master, in sich a time as dis—come away from dem plates, you Great Smash, and let a proper hand take hold on 'em."

Here we ought to say that Captain Willoughby had christened Bess by the *sobriquet* of Great Smash, on account of her size, which fell little short of two hundred, estimated in pounds, and a certain facility she possessed in destroying crockery, while 'Mony went by the milder appellation of "Little Smash;" not that bowls or plates fared any better in her hands, but because she weighed only one hundred and eighty.

"Dis is what I tell 'em, master," continued Mari', in a remonstrating, argumentative sort of a tone, with dogmatism and respect singularly mingled in her manner—"Dis, massa, just what I tell 'em all. I tell 'em, says I, this is Hunter Knoll and not Albonny—here no store—no place to buy t'ing if you break 'em; no good woman who know ebbery t'ing, to tell you where to find t'ing, if you lose him. If dere was only good woman, dat somet'ing; but no fortun'-teller out here in de bushes—no, no—when a silber spoon go, here, he go for good and all—Goody, massy"—staring at something in the court—"what he call dat, sa?"

"That—oh! that is only an Indian hunter I keep about me, to bring us game—you'll never have an empty spit, Mari', as long as he is with us. Fear nothing; he will not harm you. His name is Nick."

"De Ole Nick, massa?"

"No, only Saucy Nick. The fellow is a little slovenly to-day in his appearance, and you see he has brought already several partridges, besides a rabbit. We shall have venison in the season."

Here all the negroes, after staring at Nick quite a minute, set up a loud shout, laughing as if the Tuscarora had been created for their special amusement. Although the captain was somewhat of a martinet in his domestic discipline, it had ever altogether exceeded his authority, or his art, to prevent these bursts of merriment; and he led his wife away from the din, leaving Mari', Great Smash, and Little Smash, with the two Plinies, in ecstasies at their own uproar. Burst succeeded burst, until the Indian walked away in offended dignity.

Such was the commencement of the domestication of the Willoughbys at the Hutted Knoll. The plan of our tale does

not require us to follow them minutely for the few succeeding years, though some further explanation may be necessary to show why this settlement varied a little from the ordinary course.

That very season, or in the summer of 1765, Mrs. Willoughby inherited some real estate in Albany, by the death of an uncle, as well as a few thousand pounds currency, in ready money. This addition to his fortune made the captain exceedingly comfortable, or, for that day, rich; and it left him to act his pleasure as related to his lands. Situated as these last were, so remote from other settlements as to render highways for some time hopeless, he saw no use in endeavoring to anticipate the natural order of things. It would only create embarrassment to raise produce that could not be sent to market; and he well knew that a population of any amount could not exist, in quiet, without the usual attendants of buying and selling. Then it suited his own taste to be the commander-in-chief of an isolated establishment like this; and he was content to live in abundance on his flats, feeding his people, his cattle, and even his hogs to satiety, and having wherewithal to send away the occasional adventurer, who entered his clearing, contented and happy.

Thus it was that he neither sold nor leased. No person dwelt on his land who was not a direct dependent, or hireling, and all that the earth yielded he could call his own. Nothing was sent abroad for sale but cattle. Every year, a small drove of fat beeves and milch cows found their way through the forest to Albany, and the proceeds returned in the shape of foreign supplies. The rents and the interests on bonds were left to accumulate, or were applied to aid Robert in obtaining a new step in the army. Lands began to be granted nearer and nearer to his own, and here and there some old officer like himself, or a solitary farmer, began to cut away the wilderness, but none in his immediate vicinity.

Still the captain did not live altogether as a hermit. He visited Edmeston, of Mount Edmeston, a neighbor less than fifty miles distant; was occasionally seen at Johnson Hall, with Sir William; or at the bachelor establishment of Sir John, on the Mohawk; and once or twice he so far overcame his indolence as to consent to serve as a member for a new county, that was called Tryon, after a ruling governor.

CHAPTER IV.

"Hail! sober evening! Thee the harassed brain
And aching heart with fond orisons greet;
The respite thou of toil; the balm of pain;
To thoughtful mind the hour for musing meet.
'Tis then the sage from forth his lone retreat
The rolling universe around espies;
'Tis then the bard may hold communion sweet
With lovely shapes unkenned by grosser eyes,
And quick perception comes of finer mysteries."
—SANDS.

IN the preceding chapter we closed the minute narrative with a scene at the Hut, in the spring of 1765. We must now advance the time just ten years, opening, anew, in the month of May, 1775. This, it is scarcely necessary to tell the reader, is bringing him at once up to the earliest days of the Revolution. The contest which preceded that great event had in fact occurred in the intervening time, and we are now about to plunge into the current of some of the minor incidents of the struggle itself.

Ten years are a century in the history of a perfectly new settlement. The changes they produce are even surprising, though in ordinary cases they do not suffice to erase the signs of a recent origin. The forest is opened, and the light of day admitted, it is true; but its remains are still to be seen in multitudes of unsightly stumps, dead standing trees, and ill-looking stubs. These vestiges of the savage state usually remain a quarter of a century; in certain regions they are to be found for even more than twice that period. All this, however, had Captain Willoughby escaped, in consequence of limiting his clearing, in a great measure, to that which had been made by the beavers, and from which time and natural decay had, long before his arrival, re-

moved every ungainly object. It is true, here and there a few acres had been cleared on the firmer ground, at the margin of the flats, where barns and farm buildings had been built and orchards planted; but, in order to preserve the harmony of his view, the captain had caused all the stumps to be pulled and burnt, giving to these places the same air of agricultural finish as characterized the fields on the lower land.

To this sylvan scene, at a moment which preceded the setting of the sun by a little more than an hour, and in the first week of the genial month of May, we must now bring the reader in fancy. The season had been early, and the Beaver Manor, or the part of it which was cultivated, lying low and sheltered, vegetation had advanced considerably beyond the point that is usual, at that date, in the elevated region of which we have been writing. The meadows were green with matted grasses, the wheat and rye resembled rich velvets, and the plowed fields had the fresh and mellowed appearance of good husbandry and a rich soil. The shrubbery, of which the captain's English taste had introduced quantities, was already in leaf, and even portions of the forest began to veil their somber mysteries with the delicate foliage of an American spring.

The site of the ancient pond was a miracle of rustic beauty. Everything like inequality or imperfection had disappeared, the whole presenting a broad and picturesquely shaped basin, with outlines fashioned principally by Nature, an artist that rarely fails in effect. The flat was divided into fields by low post-and-rail fences, the captain making it a law to banish all unruly animals from his estate. The barns and outbuildings were neatly made and judiciously placed, and the three or four roads, or lanes, that led to them, crossed the lowland in such graceful curves as greatly to increase the beauty of the landscape. Here and there a log cabin was visible, nearly buried in the forest, with a few necessary and neat appliances around it; the homes of laborers who had long dwelt in them, and who seemed content to pass their lives in the same place. As most of these men had married and become fathers, the whole colony, including children, notwithstanding the captain's policy not to settle, had grown to considerably more than a hundred souls, of whom three-and-twenty were able-bodied men. Among the latter were the millers; but their mills were buried in the ravine where they had been first placed, quite out of sight from the picture above, concealing all the unavoidable and ungainly looking objects of a saw-mill yard.

As a matter of course, the object of the greatest interest, as it was the most conspicuous, was the Hutted Knoll, as the house was now altogether called, and the objects it contained. Thither, then, we will now direct our attention, and describe things as they appeared ten years after they were first presented to the reader.

The same agricultural finish as prevailed on the flats pervaded every object on the Knoll, though some labor had been expended to produce it. Everything like a visible rock, the face of the cliff on the northern end excepted, had disappeared, the stones having been blasted and either worked into walls for foundations, or walls for fence. The entire base of the Knoll, always excepting the little precipice at the rivulet, was encircled by one of the latter, erected under the superintendence of Jamie Allen, who still remained at the Hut, a bachelor, and, as he said himself, a happy man. The southern face of the Knoll was converted into a lawn, there being quite two acres intersected with walks and well garnished with shrubbery. What was unusual in America at that day, the captain, owing to his English education, had avoided straight lines and formal paths; giving to the little spot the improvement on Nature which is a consequence of embellishing her works without destroying them. On each side of this lawn was an orchard, thrifty and young, in which the trees were already beginning to show signs of putting forth their blossoms.

About the Hut itself the appearance of change was not so manifest. Captain Willoughby had caused it to be con-

structed originally as he intended to preserve it, and it formed no part of his plan to cover it with tawdry colors. There it stood, brown above, and gray beneath, as wood or stone was the material, with a widely projecting roof. It had no piazzas, or stoops, and was still without external windows, one range excepted. The loops had been cut, but it was more for the benefit of lighting the garrets than for any other reason, all of them being glazed, and serving the end for which they had been pierced. The gates remained precisely in the situation in which they were when last presented to the eye of the reader! There they stood, each leaning against the wall on its own side of the gateway, the hinges beginning to rust by time and exposure. Ten years had not produced a day of sufficient leisure in which to hang them; though Mrs. Willoughby frequently spoke of the necessity of doing so, in the course of the first summer. Even she had got to be so familiarized to her situation, and so accustomed to seeing the leaves where they stood, that she now regarded them as a couple of sleeping lions in stone, or as characteristic ornaments, rather than as substantial defenses to the entrance of the dwelling.

The interior of the Hut, however, had undergone many alterations. The western half had been completed, and handsome rooms had been fitted up for guests and inmates of the family in the portion of the edifice occupied by the latter. Additional comforts had been introduced, and the garners, cribs, and lodgings of the laborers having been transferred to the skirts of the forest, the house was more strictly and exclusively the abode of a respectable and well-regulated family. In the rear, too, a wing had been thrown along the verge of the cliff, completely inclosing the court. This wing, which overhung the rivulet, and had not only a most picturesque site, but a most picturesque and lovely view, now contained the library, parlor, and music-room, together with other apartments devoted to the uses of the ladies during the day; the old portions of the house that had once been similarly occupied being now converted into sleeping apartments. The new wing was constructed entirely of massive squared logs, so as to render it bullet proof, there being no necessity for a stone foundation, standing, as it did, on the verge of a cliff some forty feet in height. This was the part of the edifice which had external windows, the elevation removing it from the danger of inroads or hostile shot, while the air and view were both grateful and desirable. Some extra attention had been paid to the appearance of the meadows on this side of the Knoll, and the captain had studiously kept their skirts, as far as the eye could see from the windows, in virgin forests; placing the barns, cabins, and other detached buildings so far south as to be removed from view.

Beulah Willoughby, a gentle, tranquil creature, had a profound admiration of the beauties of Nature; and to her her parents had yielded the control of everything that was considered accessory to the mere charms of the eye; her taste had directed most of that which had not been effected by the noble luxuriance of Nature. Wild roses were already putting forth their leaves in various fissures of the rocks, where earth had been placed for their support, and the margin of the little stream that actually washed the base of the cliff, winding off in a charming sweep through the meadows, a rivulet of less than twenty feet in width, was garnished with willows and alder. Quitting this sylvan spot we will return to the little shrub-adorned area in front of the Hut. This spot the captain called his glacis, while his daughters termed it the lawn. The hour, it will be remembered, was shortly before sunset, and thither nearly all the family had repaired to breathe the freshness of the pure air, and bathe in the genial warmth of a season which is ever so grateful to those who have recently escaped from the rigor of a stern winter. Rude, and sufficiently picturesque, garden seats were scattered about, and on one of these was seated the captain and his wife; he, with his hair sprinkled with gray, a hale, athletic, healthy man of sixty, and she a fresh-looking, mild-featured and still handsome matron of forty-eight. In front stood a

venerable-looking personage, of small stature, dressed in rusty black, of the cut that denoted the attire of a clergyman, before it was considered aristocratic to wear the outward symbols of belonging to the church of God. This was the Rev. Jedidiah Woods, a native of New England, who had long served as a chaplain in the same regiment with the captain, and who, being a bachelor on retired pay, had dwelt with his old messmate for the last eight years in the double capacity of one who exercised the healing art as well for the soul as for the body. To his other offices he added that of an instructor in various branches of knowledge to the young people. The chaplain, for so he was called by everybody in and around the Hut, was, at the moment of which we are writing, busy in expounding to his friends certain nice distinctions that existed, or which he fancied to exist, between a tom-cod and a chub, the former of which fish he very erroneously conceived he held in his hand at that moment; the Rev. Mr. Woods being a much better angler than naturalist. To his dissertation Mrs. Willoughby listened with great good-nature, endeavoring all the while to feel interested; while her husband kept uttering his "by all means," "yes," "certainly," "you're quite right, Woods," his gaze at the same time fastened on Joel Strides and Pliny the elder, who were unharnessing their teams on the flats beneath, having just finished a "land," and deeming it too late to commence another.

Beulah, her pretty face shaded by a large sun-bonnet, was superintending the labors of Jamie Allen, who, finding nothing just then to do as a mason, was acting in the capacity of gardener; his hat was thrown upon the grass, with his white locks bare, and he was delving about some shrubs, with the intention of giving them the benefit of a fresh dressing of manure. Maud, however, without a hat of any sort, her long, luxuriant, silken, golden tresses covering her shoulders, and occasionally veiling her warm, rich cheek, was exercising with a battledore, keeping Little Smash, now increased in size to quite fourteen stone, rather actively employed as an assistant, whenever the exuberance of her own spirits caused her to throw the plaything beyond her reach. In one of the orchards, near by, two men were employed trimming the trees. To these the captain next turned all his attention, just as he had encouraged the chaplain to persevere, by exclaiming, "Out of all question, my dear sir,"—though he was absolutely ignorant that the other had just advanced a downright scientific heresy. At this critical moment a cry from Little Smash, that almost equaled a downfall of crockery in its clamor, drew every eye in her direction.

"What is the matter, Desdemona?" asked the chaplain, a little tartly, by no means pleased at having his natural history startled by sounds so inapplicable to the subject. "How often have I told you that the Lord views with displeasure anything so violent and improper as your outcries?"

"Can't help him, dominie—nebber can help him, when he take me sudden. See, masser, dere come Ole Nick!"

There was Nick, sure enough. For the first time in more than two years, the Tuscarora was seen approaching the house, on the long, loping trot that he affected when he wished to seem busy, or honestly earning his money. He was advancing by the only road that was ever traveled by the stranger as he approached the Hut; or he came up the valley. As the woman spoke, he had just made his appearance over the rocks, in the direction of the mills. At that distance, quite half a mile, he would not have been recognized but for this gait, which was too familiar to all at the Knoll, however, to be mistaken.

"That is Nick, sure enough!" exclaimed the captain. "The fellow comes at the pace of a runner; or as if he were the bearer of some important news!"

"The tricks of Saucy Nick are too well known to deceive anyone here," observed Mrs. Willoughby, who, surrounded by her husband and children, always felt so happy as to deprecate every appearance of danger.

"These savages will keep that pace for

hours at a time," observed the chaplain; "a circumstance that has induced some naturalists to fancy a difference in the species, if not in the genus."

"Is he chub or tom-cod, Woods?" asked the captain, throwing back on the other all he recollected of the previous discourse.

"Nay," observed Mrs. Willoughby, anxiously, "I do think he may have some intelligence! It is now more than a twelvemonth since we have seen Nick."

"It is more than twice a twelvemonth, my dear; I have not seen the fellow's face since I denied him the keg of rum for his 'discovery' of another beaver pond. He has tried to sell me a new pond every season since the purchase of this."

"Do you think he took serious offense, Hugh, at that refusal? If so, would it not be better to give him what he asks?"

"I have thought little about it, and care less, my dear. Nick and I know each other pretty well. It is an acquaintance of thirty years' standing, and one that has endured trials by flood and field, and even by the horsewhip. No less than three times have I been obliged to make these salutary applications to Nick's back, with my own hands; though it is now more than ten years since a blow has passed between us."

"Does a savage ever forgive a blow?" asked the chaplain, with a grave air and a look of surprise.

"I fancy a savage is quite as apt to forgive it as a civilized man, Woods. To you, who have served so long in his Majesty's army, a blow, in the way of punishment, can be no great novelty."

"Certainly not, as respects the soldiers; but I did not know Indians were ever flogged."

"That is because you never happened to be present at the ceremony—but this is Nick, sure enough; and by his trot I begin to think the fellow has some message or news."

"How old is the man, captain? Does an Indian never break down?"

"Nick must be fairly fifty, now. I have known him more than half that period, and he was an experienced, and, to own the truth, a brave and skillful warrior, when we first met. I rate him fifty, every day of it."

By this time the new-comer was so near that the conversation ceased, all standing gazing at him, as he drew near, and Maud gathering up her hair with maiden bashfulness, though certainly Nick was no stranger. As for Little Smash, she waddled off to proclaim the news to the younger Pliny, Mari', and Great Smash, all of whom were still in the kitchen of the Hut, flourishing, sleek, and glistening.

Soon after, Nick arrived. He came up the Knoll on his loping trot, never stopping until he was within five or six yards of the captain, when he suddenly halted, folded his arms, and stood in a composed attitude, lest he should betray a womanish desire to tell his story. He did not even pant, but appeared as composed and unmoved as if he had walked the half-mile he had been seen to pass over, on a trot.

"Sago—Sago," cried the captain heartily, "you are welcome back, Nick. I am glad to see you still so active."

"Sago," answered the guttural voice of the Indian, who quietly nodded his head.

"What will you have to refresh you, after such a journey, Nick? Our trees give us good cider now."

"Santa Cruz better," replied the sententious Tuscarora.

"Santa Cruz is certainly stronger," answered the captain, laughing; "and, in that sense, you may find it better. You shall have a glass as soon as we go to the house. What news do you bring, that you come in so fast?"

"Glass won't do. Nick bring news worth jug. Squaw give two jug for Nick's news. Is it barg'n?"

"I!" cried Mrs. Willoughby, "what concern can I have with your news? My daughters are both with me, and, Heaven be praised! both are well. What can I care for your news, Nick?"

"Got no papoose but gal? T'ink you got boy. Officer—great chief—up here, down yonder—over dere."

"Robert—Major Willoughby! What can you have to tell me of my son?"

"Tell all about him for one jug. Jug out yonder; Nick's story out here. One good as t'other."

"You shall have all you ask, Nick." These were not temperance days, when conscience took so firm a stand between the bottle and the lips. "You shall have all you ask, Nick, provided you can really give me good accounts of my noble boy. Speak, then. What have you to say?"

"Say you see him in ten, five minute. Sent Nick before to keep moder from too much cry."

An exclamation from Maud followed. Then the ardent girl was seen rushing down the lawn, her hat thrown aside and her bright, fair hair again flowing in ringlets on her shoulders. She flew rather than ran in the direction of the mill, where the figure of Robert Willoughby was seen rushing forward to meet her. Suddenly the girl stopped, threw herself on a log and hid her face. In a few minutes she was locked in her brother's arms. Neither Mrs. Willoughby nor Beulah imitated this impetuous movement on the part of Maud; but the captain, chaplain, and even Jamie Allen, hastened down the road to meet and welcome the young major. Ten minutes later Bob Willoughby was folded to his mother's heart. Then came Beulah's turn, after which, the news having flown through the household, the young man had to receive the greetings of Mari', both the Smashes, the younger Pliny and all the dogs. A tumultuous quarter of an hour brought all around again to its proper place and restored something like order to the Knoll. Still an excitement prevailed the rest of the day, for the sudden arrival of a guest always produced a sensation in that retired settlement. Much more likely, then, was the unexpected appearance of the only son and heir to create one. As everybody bustled and was in motion, the whole family was in the parlor, and Major Willoughby was receiving the grateful refreshment of a delicious cup of tea before the sun set. The chaplain would have retired out of delicacy, but to this the captain would not listen. He would have everything proceed as if the son were a customary guest, though it might have been seen by the manner in which his mother's affectionate eye was fastened on his handsome face, as well as that in which his sister Beulah, in particular, hung about him under the pretense of supplying his wants, that the young man was anything but an every-day inmate.

"How the lad has grown!" said the captain, tears of pride starting into his eyes in spite of a very manful resolution to appear composed and soldier-like.

"I was about to remark that myself, captain," observed the chaplain. "I do think Mr. Robert has got to his full six feet—every inch as tall as you are yourself, my good sir."

"That is he, Woods—and taller in one sense. He is a major already, at twenty-seven. It is a step I was not able to reach at near twice the age."

"That is owing, my dear sir," answered the son quickly, and with a slight tremor in his voice, "to your not having as kind a father as has fallen to my share—or at least one not as well provided with the means of purchasing."

"Say none at all, Bob, and you can wound no feeling, while you will tell the truth. My father died a lieutenant-colonel when I was a schoolboy. I owed my ensigncy to my uncle, Sir Hugh, the father of the present Sir Harry Willoughby; after that I owed each step to hard and long service. Your mother's legacies have helped you along at a faster rate, though I do trust there has been some merit to aid in the preferment."

"Speaking of Sir Harry Willoughby, sir, reminds me of one part of my errand to the Hut," said the major, glancing his eye toward his father, as if to prepare him for some unexpected intelligence.

"What of my cousin?" demanded the captain, calmly. "We have not met in thirty years, and are the next thing to strangers to each other. Has he made that silly match of which I heard something when last in York? Has he disinherited his daughter, as he threatened? Use no reserve here; our friend Woods is one of the family."

"Sir Harry Willoughby is not married, sir, but dead."

"Dead?" repeated the captain, setting down his cup like one who received a sudden shock. "I hope not without having been reconciled to his daughter, and providing for her large family?"

"He died in her arms, and escaped the consequences of his silly intention to marry his own housekeeper. With one material exception, he has left Mrs. Bowater his whole fortune."

The captain sat thoughtful for some time, everyone else being silent and attentive. But the mother's feelings prompted her to inquire as to the nature of the exception.

"Why, mother, contrary to all my expectations, and I may say wishes, he has left me twenty-five thousand pounds in the fives. I only hold the money as my father's trustee."

"You do no such thing, Master Bob, I can tell you!" said the captain, with emphasis.

The son looked at the father a moment, as if to see whether he was understood, and then he proceeded—

"I presume you remember, sir," said the major, "that you are the heir to the title?"

"I have not forgotten that, Major Willoughby; but what is an empty baronetcy to a happy husband and father like me, here in the wilds of America? Were I still in the army, and a colonel, the thing might be of use. As I am, I would rather have a tolerable road from this place to the Mohawk than the duchy of Norfolk without the estate."

"Estate there is none, certainly," returned the major, in a tone of a little disappointment, "except the twenty-five thousand pounds, unless you include that which you possess where you are—not insignificant, by the way, sir."

"It will do well enough for old Hugh Willoughby, late a captain in His Majesty's 23d Regiment of Foot, but not so well for Sir Hugh. No, no, Bob. Let the baronetcy sleep awhile; it has been used quite enough for the last hundred years or more. Out of this circle there are probably not ten persons in America who know that I have any claims to it."

The major colored, and he played with the spoon of his empty cup, stealing a glance or two around before he answered.

"I beg your pardon, Sir Hugh—my dear father, I mean; but—to own the truth—never anticipating such a decision on your part, I have spoken of the thing to a good many friends. I dare say—if the truth were known—I've called you the Baronet, or Sir Hugh, to others at least a dozen times."

"Well, should it be so, the thing will be forgotten. A parson can be unfrocked, Woods, and a baronet can be unbaroneted, I suppose."

"But Sir William"—so everybody called the well-known Sir William Johnson in the colony of New York—"But Sir William found it useful, Willoughby, and so I dare say will his son and successor, Sir John," observed the attentive wife and anxious mother; "and if you are not now in the army, Bob is. It will be a good thing for our son one day, and ought not to be lost."

"Ah, I see how it is, Beulah; your mother has no notion to lose the right of being called Lady Willoughby."

"I am sure my mother, sir, wishes to be called nothing that does not become your wife. If you remain Mr. Hugh Willoughby she will remain Mrs. Hugh Willoughby. But, papa, it might be useful to Bob."

Beulah was a great favorite with the captain, Maud being only his darling. He listened always to whatever the former said, therefore, with indulgence and respect. He often told the chaplain that his daughter Beulah had the true feelings of her sex, possessing a sort of instinct for whatever was right and becoming in woman.

"Well, Bob may have the baronetcy, then," he said, smiling. "Major Sir Robert Willoughby will not sound amiss in a dispatch."

"But Bob cannot have it, father," exclaimed Maud. "No one can have it but you; and it's a pity it should be lost."

"Let him wait, then, until I am out of the way; when he may claim his own."

"Can that be done?" inquired the mother, to whom nothing was without interest that affected her children. "How is it, Mr. Woods?—may a title be dropped and then picked up again?—how is this, Robert?"

"I believe it may, my dear mother; it will always exist, so long as there is an heir, and my father's disrelish for it will not be binding on me."

"Oh! in that case, then, all will come right in the end; though, as your father does not want it, I wish you could have it now."

This was said with the most satisfied air in the world, as if the speaker had no interest in the matter herself, and it closed the conversation for that time. It was not easy to keep up an interest in anything that related to the family, where Mrs. Willoughby was concerned, in which heart did not predominate. A baronetcy was a considerable dignity in the colony of New York in the year of our Lord 1775, and it gave its possessor far more importance than it would have done in England. In the whole colony there was but one, though a good many were to be found further south; and he was known as "Sir John," as in England, Lord Rockingham, or in America at a later day, La Fayette, was known as "The Marquis." Under such circumstances, then, it would have been no trifling sacrifice to an ordinary woman to forego the pleasure of being called "my lady." But the sacrifice cost our matron no pain, no regrets, no thought, even. The same attachments which made her happy, away from the world, in the wilderness where she dwelt, supplanted all other feelings, and left her no room or leisure to think of such vanities. When the discourse changed, it was understood that "Sir Hugh" was not to be "Sir Hugh," and that "Sir Robert" must bide his time.

"Where did you fall in with the Tuscarora, Bob?" suddenly asked the captain, as much to bring up another subject as through curiosity. "The fellow had been so long away I began to think we should never see him again."

"He tells me, sir, he has been on a war-path somewhere out among the western savages. It seems these Indians fight among themselves, from time to time, and Nick has been trying to keep his hand in. I found him down at Canajoharie, and took him for a guide, though he had the honesty to own he was on the point of coming over here, had I not engaged him."

"I'll answer for it he didn't tell you that until you had paid him for the job."

"Why, to own the truth, he did not, sir. He pretended something about owing money in the village, and got his pay in advance. I learned his intentions only when we were within a few miles of the Hut."

"I'm glad to find, Bob, that you can give the place its proper name. How gloriously Sir Hugh Willoughby, Bart., of The Hut, Tryon County, New York, would sound, Woods! Did Nick boast of the scalps he has taken from the Carthaginians?"

"He lays claim to three, I believe, though I have seen none of his trophies."

"The Roman hero! Yet I have known Nick rather a dangerous warrior. He was out against us in some of my earliest service, and our acquaintance was made by my saving his life from the bayonet of one of my old grenadiers. I thought the fellow remembered the act for some years; but, in the end, I believe, I flogged all the gratitude out of him. His motives now are concentrated in the little island of Santa Cruz."

"Here he is, father," said Maud, stretching her light, flexible form out of a window. "Mike and the Indian are seated at the lower spring, with a jug between them, and appear to be in a deep conversation."

"Aye, I remember on their first acquaintance that Mike mistook Saucy Nick for Old Nick. The Indian was indignant for a while at being mistaken for the Evil Spirit, but the worthies soon found a bond of union between them, and before six months he and the Irishman became sworn friends. It is said whenever two

human beings love a common principle, that it never fails to make them firm allies."

"And what was the principle in this case, Captain Willoughby?" inquired the chaplain, with curiosity.

"Santa Cruz. Mike renounced whisky altogether after he came to America and took to rum. As for Nick, he was never so vulgar as to find pleasure in the former liquor."

The whole party had gathered to the windows, while the discourse was proceeding, and looking out, each individual saw Mike and his friend in the situation described by Maud. The two amateurs—connoisseurs would not be misapplied, either—had seated themselves at the brink of a spring of delicious water, and removing the corn-cob that Pliny, the younger, had felt it to be classical to affix to the nozzle of a quart jug, had, some time before, commenced the delightful recreation of sounding the depth, not of the spring, but of the vessel. As respects the former, Mike, who was a wag in his way, had taken a hint from a practice said to be common in Ireland, called "potato and point," which means to eat the potato and point at the butter; declaring that "rum and pi'nt" was every bit as entertaining as a "pi'nt of rum." On this principle, then, with a broad grin on a face that opened from ear to ear whenever he laughed, the County Leitrim man would gravely point his finger at the water, in a sort of mock-homage, and follow up the movement with such a suck at the nozzle as, aided by the efforts of Nick, soon analyzed the upper half of the liquor that had entered by that very passage. All this time, conversation did not flag, and, as the parties grew warm, confidence increased, though reason sensibly diminished. As a part of this discourse will have some bearing on what is to follow, it may be in place to relate it here.

"Ye're a jewel, ye be, ould Nick or young Nick!" cried Mike, in an ecstasy of friendship, just after he had completed his first half-pint. "Ye're as wilcome at the Huts as if ye owned thim, and I love ye as I did my own brother, before I left the County Leitrim—paice to his sowl!"

"He's dead?" asked Nick, sententiously; for he had lived enough among the pale-faces to have some notions of their theory about the soul.

"That's more than I know; but, living or dead, the man must have a sowl, ye understand, Nicholas. A human crathure widout a sowl is what I call a heretic; and none of the O'Hearns ever came to that."

Nick was tolerably drunk, but by no means so far gone that he had not manners enough to make a grave and somewhat dignified gesture, which was as much as to say he was familiar with the subject.

"All go ole fashion here?" he asked, avoiding every appearance of curiosity, however.

"That does it—that it does, Nicholas. All goes ould enough. The captain begins to get ould; and the missus is oulder than she used to be; and Joel's wife looks a hundred, though she isn' t'irty; and Joel himself, the spalpeen—he looks——" a gulp at the jug stopped the communication.

"Dirty, too?" added the sententious Tuscarora, who did not comprehend more than half his friend said.

"Aye, dir-r-ty—he's always that. He a dirthy fellow, that thinks his Yankee char*ac*tur is above all other things."

Nick's countenance became illuminated with an expression nowise akin to that produced by rum, and he fastened on his companion one of his fiery gazes, which occasionally seemed to penetrate to the center of the object looked at.

"Why pale-face hate one anoder? Why Irishman don't love Yankee?"

"Och! love the crathure, is it? You'd betther ask me to love a to'd"—for so Michael would pronounce the word "toad." "What is there to love about him but skin and bone? I'd as soon love a skiliten. Yes—an immortal skiliten."

Nick made another gesture, and then he endeavored to reflect, like one who had a grave business in contemplation. The Santa Cruz confused his brain, but the Indian never entirely lost his presence of

mind; or never, at least, so long as he could either see or walk.

"Don't like him" — rejoined Nick. "Like anybody?"

"To be sure I does—I like the cap'n —och, he's a jontleman—and I likes the missus; she's a lady—and I likes Miss Beuly, who's a swate young woman—and then there's Miss Maud, who's the delight of my eyes. Fegs, but isn't she a crathure to relish!"

Mike spoke like a good honest fellow, as he was at the bottom, with all his heart and soul. The Indian did not seem pleased, but he made no answer.

"You've been in the wars, then, Nick?" asked the Irishman, after a short pause.

"Yes — Nick been chief ag'in — take scalps."

"Ach! That's a mighty ugly thrade. If you'd tell 'em that in Ireland they'd not think it a possibility."

"No like fight in Ireland, hah?"

"I'll not say that—no, I'll not say that; for many's the jollification at which the fighting is the chafe amusement. But we likes thumping on the head—not skinning it."

"That your fashion—my fashion take scalp. You thump; I skin—which is best?"

"Augh! skinnin' is a dreadthful operation; but shillaleh-work comes nately and nat'rally. How many of these said scalps, now, may ye have picked up, Nick, in yer last journey?"

"T'ree—all man and woman—no papoose. One big enough make two; so call him four."

"Oh! divil burn ye, Nick; but there's a spark of your namesake in ye, afther all. T'ree human crathures skinned, and you not satisfied, and so ye'll chait a bit to make 'em four! D'ye never think, now, of yer latther ind? D'ye never confess?"

"T'ink every day of dat. Hope to find more before last day come. Plenty scalp here; ha, Mike?"

This was said a little incautiously, perhaps; but it was said under a strong native impulse. The Irishman, however, was never very logical or clear-headed; and three gills of rum had by no means helped to purify his brain. He heard the word "plenty," knew he was well fed and warmly clad, and just now, that Santa Cruz so much abounded, the term seemed peculiarly applicable.

"It's a plinthiful place it is, is this very manor. There's all sorts of things in it that's wanted. There's food and raiment, and cattle, and grain, and porkers, and praiching—yes, divil burn it. Nick, but there's what goes for praiching, though it's no more like what we calls praiching than ye're like Miss Maud in comeliness, and ye'll own yourself, Nick, ye're no beauty."

"Got handsome hair," said Nick, surlily. "How she look without scalp?"

"The likes of her, is it! Who ever saw one of her beauthy without the finest hair that ever was! What do you get for your scalps?—are they of any use when you find 'em?"

"Bring plenty bye'm bye. Whole country glad to see him before long—den beavers get pond ag'in."

"How's that—how's that, Indian? Baiver get pounded? There's no pound hereabout, and baivers is not an animal to be shut up like a hog!"

Nick perceived that his friend was past argumentation, and as he himself was approaching the state when the drunkard receives delight from he knows not what, it is unnecessary to relate any more of the dialogue. The jug was finished, each man very honestly drinking his pint, and as naturally submitting to its consequences; and this so much the more because the two were so engrossed with the rum that both forgot to pay that attention to the spring that might have been expected from its proximity.

CHAPTER V.

"The soul, my lord, is fashioned—like the lyre.
Strike one cord suddenly, and others vibrate.
Your name abruptly mentioned, casual words
Of comment on your deeds, praise from your uncle,
News from the armies, talk of your return,
A word let fall touching your youthful passion,
Suffused her cheek, called to her drooping eye
A momentary luster, made her pulse
Leap headlong, and her bosom palpitate."
—HILLHOUSE.

THE approach of night at sea and in a wilderness has always something more

solemn in it than on land in the center of civilization. As the curtain is drawn before his eyes the solitude of the mariner is increased, while even his sleepless vigilance seems in a measure baffled by the manner in which he is cut off from the signs of the hour. Thus, too, in the forest or in an isolated clearing, the mysteries of the woods are deepened, and danger is robbed of its forethought and customary guards. That evening Major Willoughby stood at the window with an arm round the slender waist of Beulah, Maud standing a little aloof; and as the twilight retired, leaving the shadows of evening to thicken on the forest that lay within a few hundred feet of that side of the Hut, and cast a gloom over the whole of the quiet solitude, he felt the force of the feeling just mentioned in a degree he had never before experienced.

"This is a very retired abode, my sisters," he said thoughtfully. "Do my father and mother never speak of bringing you out more into the world?"

"They take us to New York every winter, now father is in the Assembly," quietly answered Beulah. "We expected to meet you there last season, and were greatly disappointed that you did not come."

"My regiment was sent to the eastward, as you know, and having just received my new rank of major, it would not do to be absent at the moment. Do you ever see any one here besides those who belong to the manor?"

"Oh! yes——" exclaimed Maud, eagerly—then she paused, as if sorry she had said anything; continuing, after a little pause, in a much more moderate vein—"I mean occasionally. No doubt the place is very retired."

"Of what character are your visitors?—hunters, trappers, settlers—savages or travelers?"

Maud did not answer; but Beulah, after waiting a moment for her sister to reply, took that office on herself.

"Some of all," she said, "though few certainly of the latter class. The hunters are often here; one or two a month in the mild season; settlers rarely, as you may suppose, since my father will not sell, and there are not many about, I believe; the Indians come more frequently, though I think we have seen less of them during Nick's absence than while he was more with us. Still we have as many as a hundred in a year, perhaps, counting the women. They come in parties, you know, and five or six of these will make that number. As for travelers, they are rare; being generally surveyors, land-hunters, or perhaps a proprietor who is looking up his estate. We had two of the last in the fall before we went below."

"That is singular, and yet one might well look for an estate in a wilderness like this. Who were your proprietors?"

"An elderly man and a young one. The first was a sort of partner of the late Sir William's, I believe, who has a grant somewhere near us, for which he was searching. His name was Fonda. The other was one of the Beekmans, who has lately succeeded his father in a property of considerable extent somewhere at no great distance from us, and came to take a look at it. They say he has quite a hundred thousand acres in one body."

"And did he find his land? Tracts of thousands and tens of thousands are sometimes not to be discovered."

"We saw him twice, going and returning, and he was successful. The last time he was detained by a snow-storm, and stayed with us some days—so long, indeed, that he remained and accompanied us out when we went below. We saw much of him, too, last winter in town."

"Maud, you wrote me nothing of all this! Are visitors of this sort so very common that you do not speak of them in your letters?"

"Did I not—Beulah will scarce pardon me for that. She thinks Mr. Evert Beekman more worthy of a place in a letter than I do, perhaps."

"I think him a very respectable and sensible young man," answered Beulah, quietly, though there was a deeper tint on her cheek than common, which it was too dark to see. "I am not certain, however, he need fill much space in the letters of either of your sisters."

"Well, this is something gleaned!"

said the major, laughing; "and now, Beulah, if you will only let out a secret of the same sort about Maud, I shall be *au fait* of all the family mysteries."

"All!" repeated Maud, quickly — "would there be nothing to tell of a certain Major Willoughby, brother of mine?"

"Not a syllable. I am as heart-whole as a sound oak, and hope to remain so. At all events, all I love is in this house. To tell you the truth, girls, these are not times for a soldier to think of anything but his duty. The quarrel is getting to be serious between the mother country and her colonies."

"No so serious, brother," observed Beulah, earnestly, "as to amount to that. Evert Beekman thinks there will be trouble, but he does not appear to fancy it will go as far as any serious violence."

"Evert Beekman! Most of that family are loyal, I believe; how is it with this Evert?"

"I dare say you would call him a rebel," answered Maud, laughing, for now Beulah chose to be silent, leaving her sister to explain. "He is not fiery; but he calls himself an American, with emphasis; and that is saying a great deal, when it means he is not an Englishman. Pray, what do you call yourself, Bob?"

"I! Certainly an American in one sense, but an Englishman in another. An American, as my father was a Cumberland man, and an Englishman as a subject, and as connected with the empire."

"As St. Paul was a Roman. Heigho! Well, I fear I have but one character—or, if I have two, they are an American and a New York girl. Did I dress in scarlet, as you do, I might feel English, too, possibly."

"This is making a trifling misunderstanding too serious," observed Beulah. "Nothing can come of all the big words that have been used, than more big words. I know that is Evert Beekman's opinion."

"I hope you may prove a true prophet," answered the major, once more buried in thought. "This place does seem to be fearfully retired for a family like ours. I hope my father may be persuaded to pass more of his time in New York. Does he ever speak on the subject, girls, or appear to have any uneasiness?"

"Uneasiness about what? The place is health itself; all sorts of fevers, and agues, and those things, being quite unknown. Mamma says the toothache, even, cannot be found in this healthful spot."

"That is lucky—and yet I wish Captain Willoughby — Sir Hugh Willoughby — could be induced to live more in New York. Girls of your time of life ought to be in the way of seeing the world, too."

"In other words, of seeing admirers, Major Bob," said Maud, laughing, and bending forward to steal a glance in her brother's face. "Good night. Sir Hugh wishes us to send you into his library when we can spare you, and my lady has sent us a hint that it is ten o'clock, at which hour it is usual for sober people to retire."

The major kissed both sisters with warm affection—Beulah fancied with a sobered tenderness, and Maud thought kindly—and then they retired to join their mother, while he went to seek his father.

The captain was smoking in the library, as a room of all-head-work was called, in company with the chaplain. The practice of using tobacco in this form had grown to be so strong in both of these old inmates of garrisons that they usually passed an hour in the recreation before they went to bed. Nor shall we mislead the reader with any notions of fine-flavored Havana cigars; pipes, with Virginia cut, being the materials employed in the indulgence. A little excellent cognac and water, in which, however, the spring was not as much neglected as in the orgies related in the previous chapter, moistened their lips from time to time, giving a certain zest and comfort to their enjoyments. Just as the door opened to admit the major, he was the subject of discourse, the proud parent and the partial friend finding almost an equal gratification in discussing his fine, manly appearance, good qualities and future hopes. His presence

was untimely, then, in one sense; though he was welcome, and, indeed, expected. The captain pushed a chair to his son, and invited him to take a seat near the table, which held a spare pipe or two, a box of tobacco, a decanter of excellent brandy, a pitcher of pure water—all pleasant companions to the elderly gentlemen then in possession.

"I suppose you are too much of a maccaroni, Bob, to smoke," observed the smiling father. "I detested a pipe at your time of life; or may say, I was afraid of it; the only smoke that was in fashion among our scarlet coats being the smoke of gunpowder. Well, how come onGage and your neighbors, the Yankees?"

"Why, sir," answered the major, looking behind him, to make sure that the door was shut—"Why, sir, to own the truth, my visit here just at this moment is connected with the present state of that quarrel."

Both the captain and the chaplain drew the pipes from their mouths, holding them suspended in surprise and attention.

"The deuce it is!" exclaimed the former. "I thought I owed this unexpected pleasure to your affectionate desire to let me know I had inherited the empty honors of a baronetcy!"

"That was one motive, sir, but the least. I beg you to remember the awkwardness of my position, as a King's officer, in the midst of enemies."

"The devil! I say, parson, this exceeds heresy and schism! Do you call lodging in your father's house, Major Willoughby, being in the midst of enemies? This is rebellion against nature, and is worse than rebellion against the King."

"My dear father, no one feels more secure with you than I do; or even with Mr. Woods, here. But there are others besides you two in this part of the world, and your very settlement may not be safe a week longer; probably would not be if my presence in it were known."

Both the listeners now fairly laid down their pipes, and the smoke began gradually to dissipate, as it might have been rising from a field of battle. One looked at the other in wonder, and then both looked at the major in curiosity.

"What is the meaning of all this, my son?" asked the captain, gravely. "Has anything new occurred to complicate the old causes of the quarrel?"

"Blood has at length been drawn, sir; open rebellion has commenced!"

"This is a serious matter, indeed, if it be really so. But do you not exaggerate the consequences of some fresh indiscretion of the soldiery in firing on the people? Remember, in the other affair, even the colonial authorities justified the officers."

"This is a very different matter, sir. Blood has not been drawn in a riot, but in a battle."

"Battle! You amaze me, sir! That is indeed a serious matter, and may lead to most serious consequences!"

"The Lord preserve us from evil times," ejaculated the chaplain, "and lead us, poor dependent creatures that we are, into the paths of peace and quietness! Without His grace, we are the blind leading the blind."

"Do you mean, Major Willoughby, that armed and disciplined bodies have met in actual conflict?"

"Perhaps not literally so, my dear father; but the minute-men of Massachussetts and his Majesty's forces have met and fought. This I know full well; for my own regiment was in the field, and, I hope it is unnecessary to add, that its second officer was not absent."

"Of course these minute-men—rabble would be the better word — could not stand before you?" said the captain, compressing his lips, under a strong impulse of military pride.

Major Willoughby colored, and, to own the truth, at that moment he wished the Rev. Mr. Woods, if not literally at the devil, at least safe and sound in another room; anywhere, so it were out of earshot of the answer.

"Why, sir," he said, hesitating, not to say stammering, notwithstanding a prodigious effort to seem philosophical and calm. "To own the truth, these minute-fellows are not quite as contemptible as we

soldiers would be apt to think. It was a stone-wall affair, and dodging work; and so you know, sir, drilled troops wouldn't have the usual chance. They pressed us pretty warmly on the retreat."

"Retreat! Major Willoughby!"

"I called it retreat, sure enough; but it was only a march in again, after having done the business on which we went out. I shall admit, I say, sir, that we were hard pressed, until re-enforced."

"Re-enforced, my dear Bob! Your regiment, our regiment, could not need a re-enforcement against all the Yankees in New England."

The major could not abstain from laughing a little at this exhibition of his father's *esprit de corps;* but native frankness and love of truth compelled him to admit the contrary.

"It did, sir, notwithstanding," he answered; "and not to mince the matter, it needed it confoundedly. Some of our officers who have seen the hardest service of the last war, declare that taking the march, and the popping work, and the distance, altogether, it was the warmest day they remember. Our loss, too, was by no means insignificant, as I hope you will believe, when you know the troops engaged. We report something like three hundred casualties."

The captain did not answer for quite a minute. All this time he sat thoughtful, and even pale; for his mind was teeming with the pregnant consequences of such an outbreak. Then he desired his son to give a succinct but connected history of the whole affair. The major complied, beginning his narrative with an account of the general state of the country, and concluding it, by giving, as far as it was possible for one whose professional pride and political feelings were too deeply inolved to be entirely impartial, a reasonably just account of the particular occurrence already mentioned.

The events that led to, and the hot skirmish which it is the practice of the country to call the Battle of Lexington, and the incidents of the day itself, are too familiar to the ordinary reader to require repetition here. The major explained all the military points very clearly, did full justice to the perseverance and daring of the provincials, as he called his enemies—for, an American himself, he would not term them Americans—and threw in as many explanatory remarks as he could think of, by way of vindicating the "march in again." This he did, too, quite as much out of filial piety as out of self-love; for to own the truth, the captain's mortification as a soldier was so very evident as to give his son sensible pain.

"The effect of all this," continued the major, when his narrative of the military movements was ended, "has been to raise a tremendous feeling throughout the country, and God knows what is to follow."

"And this you have come hither to tell me, Robert," said the father kindly. "It is well done, and as I would have expected from you. We might have passed the summer here, and not have heard a whisper of so important an event."

"Soon after the affair, or as soon as we got some notion of its effect on the provinces, General Gage sent me privately with dispatches to Governor Tryon. He, Governor Tryon, was aware of your position, and as I had also to communicate the death of Sir Harry Willoughby, he directed me to come up the river privately, have an interview with Sir John if possible, and then push on under a feigned name, and communicate with you. He thinks, now Sir William is dead, that with your estate, and new rank, and local influence, you might be very serviceable in sustaining the royal cause; for it is not to be concealed that this affair is likely to take the character of an open and widespread revolt against the authority of the crown."

"General Tryon does me too much honor," answered the captain coldly. "My estate is a small body of wild land, my influence extends little beyond this beaver meadow, and is confined to my own household, and some fifteen or twenty laborers; and as for the new rank of which you speak, it is not likely the colonists will care much for that, if they disregard the rights of the King. Still, you have acted like a son in running the risk you do, Bob,

and I pray God you may get back to your regiment in safety."

"This is a cordial to my hopes, sir; for nothing would pain me more than to believe you think it my duty, because I was born in the colonies, to throw up my commission and take side with the rebels."

"I do not conceive that to be your duty any more than I conceive it to be mine to take sides against them, because I happened to be born in England. It is a weak view of moral obligations that confines them merely to the accidents of birth and birthplace. Such a subsequent state of things may have grown up as to change all our duties, and it is necessary that we discharge them as they are—not as they may have been hitherto, or may be hereafter. Those who clamor so much about mere birthplace, usually have no very clear sense of their higher obligations. Over our birth we can have no control, while we are rigidly responsible for the fulfillment of obligations voluntarily contracted."

"Do you reason thus, captain?" asked the chaplain with strong interest. "Now I confess I feel in this matter not only very much like a native American, but very much like a native Yankee in the bargain. You know I was born in the Bay, and—the major must excuse me, but it ill becomes my cloth to deceive—I hope the major will pardon me. I—I do hope——"

"Speak out, Mr. Woods," said Robert Willoughby, smiling. "You have nothing to fear from your old friend the major."

"So I thought—so I thought. Well, then, I was glad, yes, really rejoiced at heart to hear that my countrymen down east there had made the King's troops scamper."

"I am not aware that I used any such terms, sir, in connection with the manner in which we marched in, after the duty we went out on was performed," returned the young soldier, a little stiffly. "I suppose it is natural for one Yankee to sympathize with another; but my father, Mr. Woods, is an Old England, and not a New England man, and he may be excused if he feel more for the servants of the crown."

"Certainly, my dear major—certainly, my dear Mr. Robert, my old pupil, and I hope, my friend—all this is true enough, and very natural. I allow Captain Willoughby to wish the best for the King's troops, while I wish the best for my own countrymen."

"This is natural on both sides, out of all question, though it by no means follows that it is right. 'Our country, right or wrong,' is a high-sounding maxim, but it is scarcely the honest man's maxim. Our country, after all, cannot have nearer claims upon us than our parents, for instance; and who can claim a moral right to sustain even his own father in error, injustice, or crime? No, no. I hate your pithy sayings; they commonly mean nothing that is substantially good at bottom."

"But one's country in a time of actual war, sir?" said the major in a tone of as much remonstrance as habit would allow him to use to his own father.

"Quite true, Bob; but the difficulty here is to know which is one's country. It is a family quarrel at the best, and it will hardly do to talk about foreigners at all. It is the same as if I should treat Maud unkindly or harshly, because she is the child of only a friend, and not my own natural daughter. As God is my judge, Woods, I am unconscious of not loving Maud Meredith, at this moment, as tenderly as I love Beulah Willoughby. There was a period in her childhood when the playful little witch had most of my heart, I am afraid, if the truth were known. It is use and duty, then, and not mere birth, that ought to tie our hearts."

The major thought it might very well be that one child should be loved more than another, though he did not understand how there could be a divided allegiance. The chaplain looked at the subject with views still more narrowed, and he took up the cudgels of argument in sober earnest, conceiving this to be as good an opportunity as another for disposing of the matter.

"I am all for birth and blood, and natural ties," he said, "always excepting

the peculiar claims of Miss Maud, whose case is *sui generis*, and not to be confounded with any other case. A man can have but one country any more than he can have but one nature; and as he is forced to be true to that nature, so ought he morally to be true to that country. The captain says that it is difficult to determine which is one's country, in a civil war; but I cannot admit the argument. If Massachusetts and England get to blows, Massachusetts is my country; if Suffolk and Worcester counties get into a quarrel, my duty calls me to Worcester, where I was born, and so I should carry out the principle from country to country, county to county, town to town, parish to parish, or even household to household."

"This is an extraordinary view of one's duty, indeed, my dear Mr. Woods," cried the major, with a good deal of animation, "and if one-half the household quarreled with the other, you would take sides with that in which you happened to find yourself at the moment."

"It is an extraordinary view of one's duty for a parson," observed the captain. "Let us reason backward a little and ascertain where we shall come out. You put the head of the household out of the question. Has he no claims? Is a father to be altogether overlooked in the struggle between the children? Are his laws to be broken, his rights invaded, or his person to be maltreated, perhaps, and his curse disregarded, because a set of unruly children get by the ears on points connected with their own selfishness?"

"I give up the household," cried the chaplain; "for the Bible settles that, and what the Bible disposes of is beyond dispute. 'Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,' are terrible words, and must not be disobeyed. But the decalogue has not another syllable which touches the question. 'Thou shalt not kill', means murder only—common vulgar murder—and 'Thou shalt not steal,' 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' etc., don't bear on civil war, as I see. 'Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy,' 'Thou shalt not covet the ox nor the ass,' 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;' none of these—not one of them—bears at all on this question."

"What do you think of the words of the Saviour where he tells us to 'render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's?' Has Cæsar no rights here? Can Massachusetts and my Lord North settle their quarrels in such a manner as to put Cæsar altogether out of view?"

The chaplain looked down a moment, pondered a little, and then he came up to the attack again with renewed ardor.

"Cæsar is out of the question here. If his Majesty will come and take sides with us, we shall be ready to honor and obey him; but if he chooses to remain alienated from us, it is his act—not ours."

"This is a new mode of settling allegiance! If Cæsar will do as we wish, he shall still be Cæsar; but if he refuse to do as we wish, then down with Cæsar. I am an old soldier, Woods, and while I feel that this question has two sides to it, my disposition to reverence and honor the King is still strong."

The major appeared delighted, and finding matters going on so favorably, he pleaded fatigue and withdrew, feeling satisfied that if his father fairly got into a warm discussion, taking the loyal side of the question, he would do more to confirm himself in the desired views than could be effected by any other means. By this time the disputants were so warm as scarcely to notice the disappearance of the young man, the argument proceeding.

The subject is too far hackneyed, and, indeed, possesses too little interest to induce us to give more than an outline of what passed. The captain and the chaplain belonged to that class of friends which may be termed argumentative. Their constant discussions were a strong link in the chain of esteem; for they had a tendency to enliven their solitude, and to give a zest to lives that, without them, would have been exceedingly monotonous. Their ordinary subjects were theology and war, the chaplain having some practical knowledge of the last, and the captain a lively disposition to the first. In these discussions the clergyman was good-natured,

and the soldier polite, circumstances that tended to render them far more agreeable to the listener than they might otherwise have proved.

On the present occasion the chaplain rang the changes on the natural feelings, while his friend spoke most of the higher duties. The *ad captandum* part of the argument, oddly enough, fell to the share of the minister of the church, while the intellectual, discriminating, and really logical portion of the subject was handled by one trained in garrisons and camps, with a truth both of ethics and reason that would have done credit to a drilled casuist. The war of words continued till past midnight, both disputants soon getting back to their pipes, carrying on the conflict amid a smoke that did no dishonor to such a well-contested field. Leaving the captain and his friend thus intently engaged, we will take one or two glimpses into different parts of the house, before we cause all our characters to retire for the night.

About the time the battle in the library was at its height, Mrs. Willoughby was alone in her room, having disposed of all the cares and most of the duties of the day. The mother's heart was filled with a calm delight that it would have been difficult for herself to describe. All she held most dear on earth, her husband, her kind-hearted, faithful, long-loved husband; her noble son, the pride and joy of her heart; Beulah, her own natural born daughter, the mild, tractable, sincere, true-hearted child that so much resembled herself; and Maud, the adopted one, rendered dear by solicitude and tenderness, and now so fondly beloved on her own account, were all with her beneath her own roof, almost within the circle of her arms. The Hutted Knoll was no longer a solitude. The manor was not a wilderness to her; for where her heart was, there truly was her treasure also. After passing a few minutes in silent but delightful thought, this excellent, guileless woman knelt and poured out her soul in thanksgivings to the Being who had surrounded her lot with so many blessings. Alas! little did she suspect the extent, duration and direful nature of the evils which at that very moment were pending over her native country, or the pains that her own affectionate heart was to endure! The major had not suffered a whisper of the real nature of his errand to escape him, except to his father and the chaplain; and we will now follow him to his apartment, and pass a minute *tete-a-tete* with the young soldier, ere he too lays his head on his pillow.

A couple of neat rooms were prepared and furnished, that were held sacred to the uses of the heir. They were known to the whole household, black and white, as the "young captain's quarters," and even Maud called them, in her laughing off-handedness, "Bob's Sanctum." Here, then, the major found everything as he left it on his last visit, a twelvemonth before, and some few things that were strangers to him in the bargain. In that day, toilets covered with muslin, more or less worked and ornamented, were a regular appliance of every bedroom of a better-class house throughout America. The more modern "Duchesses," "Psyches," "dressing-tables," etc., etc., of our extravagant and benefit-of-the-act-taking generation, were then unknown, a moderately sized glass, surrounded by curved, gilded ornaments, hanging against the wall, above the said muslin-covered table, quite as a matter of law, if not of domestic faith.

As soon as the major had set down his candle, he looked about him, as one recognizes old friends, pleased at renewing his acquaintance with so many dear and cherished objects. The very playthings of his childhood were there; and even a beautiful and long-used hoop was embellished with ribbons, by some hand unknown to himself. "Can this be my mother?" thought the young man, approaching to examine the well-remembered hoop, which he had never found so honored before. "Can my kind, tender-hearted mother, who never will forget that I am no longer a child, can she really have done this? I must laugh at her to-morrow about it, even while I kiss and bless her." Then he turned to the toilet, where stood a basket filled with different articles, which

at once he understood were offerings to himself. Never had he visited the Hut without finding such a basket in his room at night. It was a tender proof how truly and well he was remembered in his absence.

"Ah!" thought the major, as he opened a bundle of knit lamb's-wool stockings, "here is my dear mother again, with her thoughts about damp feet and the exposure of service. And a dozen shirts, too, with 'Beulah' pinned on one of them! How the deuce does the dear girl suppose I am to carry away such a stock of linen without even a horse to ease me of a bundle? My kit would be like that of the commander-in-chief, were I to take away all that these dear relatives design for me. What's this? A purse! a handsome silken purse, too, with Beulah's name on it. Has Maud nothing here? Why has Maud forgotten me? Ruffles, handkerchiefs, gaiters—yes, here is a pair of my mother's own knitting, but nothing of Maud's. Ha! what have we here? As I live, a beautiful silken scarf, netted in a way to make a whole regiment envious. Can this have been bought, or has it been the work of a twelvemonth? No name on it, either. Would my father have done this? Perhaps it is one of his old scarfs. If so, it is an old new one; for I do not think it has ever been worn. I must inquire into this in the morning. I wonder there is nothing of Maud's!"

As the major laid aside his presents, he kissed the scarf, and then—I regret to say without saying his prayers—the young man went to bed.

The scene must now be transferred to the room where the sisters—in affection, if not in blood — were about to seek their pillows also. Maud, ever the quickest and most prompt in her movements, was already in her night-clothes, and wrapping a shawl about herself, was seated waiting for Beulah to finish her nightly devotions. It was not long before the latter rose from her knees and then our heroine spoke.

"The major must have examined the basket by this time," she cried, her cheek rivaling the tint of a ribbon it leaned against on the back of the chair. "I heard his heavy tramp, tramp, tramp, as he went to his room. How differently those men walk from us girls, Beulah!"

"They do, indeed; and Bob has got to be so large and heavy now, that he quite frightens me sometimes. Do you not think he grows wonderfully like papa?"

"I do not see it. He wears his own hair, and it's a pity he should ever cut it off, it's so handsome and curling. Then he is taller, but lighter—has more color—is so much younger, and every way so different, I wonder you think so. I do not think him in the least like father."

"Well that is odd, Maud. Both mother and myself were struck with the resemblance this evening, and we were both delighted to see it. Papa is quite handsome, and so I think is Bob. Mother says he is not quite so handsome as father was at his age, but so like him it is surprising!"

"Men may be handsome and not alike. Father is certainly one of the handsomest elderly men of my acquaintance—and the major is so-so-ish—but I wonder you can think a man of seven-and-twenty so very like one of sixty odd. Bob tells me he can play the flute quite readily now, Beulah."

"I dare say; he does everything he undertakes uncommonly well. Mr. Woods said a few days since he had never met with a boy who was quicker at his mathematics."

"Oh! All Mr. Wood's geese are swans. I dare say there have been other boys who were quite as clever. I do not believe in nonpareils, Beulah."

"You surprise me, Maud—you whom I always supposed such a friend of Bob's! He thinks everything you do, too, so perfect! Now, this very evening he was looking at the sketch you had made of the Knoll, and he protested he did not know a regular artist in England even that would have done it better."

Maud stole a glance at her sister, while the latter was speaking from under her cap, and her cheeks now fully put the ribbon to shame; but her smile was still saucy and willful.

"Oh! nonsense," she said—"Bob's no

judge of drawings—he scarce knows a tree from a horse!"

"I'm surprised to hear you say so, Maud," said the generous-minded and affectionate Beulah, who could see no imperfection in Bob; "and that of your brother. When he taught you to draw, you thought him well skilled as an artist."

"Did I? I dare say I'm a capricious creature—but somehow I don't regard Bob just as I used to. He has been away from us so much of late, you know—and the army makes men so formidable—and they are not like us, you know—and, altogether, I think Bob excessively changed."

"Well, I'm glad mamma don't hear this, Maud. She looks upon her son, now he is a major, and twenty-seven, just as she used to look upon him when he was in petticoats—nay, I think she considers us all exactly as so many little children."

"She is a dear, good mother, I know," said Maud, with emphasis, tears starting to her eyes involuntarily, almost impetuously—"whatever she says, does, wishes, hopes, or thinks, is right."

"Oh! I knew you would come to as soon as there was a question about mother! Well, for my part, I have no such horror of men as not to feel just as much tenderness for father or brother as I feel for mamma herself."

"Not for Bob, Beulah. Tenderness for Bob! Why, my dear sister, that is feeling tenderness for a Major of Foot, a very different thing from feeling it for one's mother. As for papa—dear me, he is glorious, and I do so love him."

"You ought to, Maud; for you were, and I am not certain that you are not, at this moment, his darling."

It was odd that this was said without the least thought on the part of the speaker that Maud was not her natural sister—that in fact she was not in the least degree related to her by blood. But so closely and judiciously had Captain and Mrs. Willoughby managed the affair of their adopted child, that neither they themselves, Beulah, nor the inmates of the family or household, ever thought of her but as of a real daughter of her nominal parents. As for Beulah, her feelings were so simple and sincere, that they were even beyond the ordinary considerations of delicacy, and she took precisely the same liberties with her titular, as she would have done with a natural, sister. Maud alone of all in the Hut remembered her birth, and submitted to some of its most obvious consequences. As respects the captain, the idea never crossed her mind that she was adopted by him; as respects her mother, she filled to her in every sense that sacred character; Beulah, too, was a sister in thought and deed; but Bob, he had so changed, had been so many years separated from her, had once actually called her Miss Meredith—somehow, she knew not how herself—it was fully six years since she had begun to remember that he was not her brother.

"As for my father," said Maud, rising with emotion, and speaking with startling emphasis, "I will not say I love him—I worship him."

"Ah! I know that well enough, Maud; and to say the truth, you are a couple of idolators between you. Mamma says this sometimes; though she owns she is not jealous. But it would pain her excessively to hear that you do not feel toward Bob just as we all feel."

"But ought I?—Beulah, I cannot!"

"Ought you!—Why not, Maud? Are you in your senses, child?"

"But—you know—I'm sure—you ought to remember——"

"What?" demanded Beulah, really frightened at the other's excessive agitation.

"That I am not his real—true—born sister!"

This was the first time in their lives either had ever alluded to the fact in the other's presence. Beulah turned pale; she trembled all over as if in the ague; then she luckily burst into tears, else she might have fainted.

"Beulah—my sister—my own sister!" said Maud, throwing herself into the arms of the distressed girl.

"Ah! Maud, you are, you shall forever be, my only, only sister."

CHAPTER VI.

"O! It is great for our country to die when ranks are contending,
Bright is the wreath of our fame; Glory awaits for aye—
Glory, that never is dim, shining on with light never ending—
Glory, that never shall fade, never, O! never away."—PERCIVAL.

NOTWITHSTANDING the startling intelligence that had so unexpectedly reached it, and the warm polemical conflict that had been carried on within its walls, the night passed peacefully over the roof of the Hutted Knoll. At the return of dawn, the two Plinies, both the Smashes, and all the menials were again afoot; and ere long Mike, Saucy Nick, Joel, and the rest, were seen astir in the open fields, or in the margin of the woods. Cattle were fed, cows milked, fires lighted, and everything pursued its course in the order of May. The three wenches, as female negroes were then termed, *ex officio*, in America, opened their throats as was usual at that hour, and were heard singing at their labors in a way nearly to deaden the morning carols of the tenants of the forest. Mari', in particular, would have drowned the roar of Niagara. The captain used to call her his clarion.

In due time the superiors of the household made their appearance. Mrs. Willoughby was the first out of her room, as was ever the case when there was anything to be done. On the present occasion the "fatted calf" was to be killed, not in honor of the return of a prodigal son, however, but in behalf of one who was the pride of her eyes and the joy of her heart. The breakfast that she ordered was just the sort of breakfast that one must visit America to witness. France can set forth a very scientific *déjeuner a la fourchette* and England has labored and ponderous imitations; but for the spontaneous, superabundant, unsophisticated, natural, all-sufficing and all-subduing morning meal, take America, in a better-class house in the country, and you reach the *ne plus ultra* in that sort of thing. Tea, coffee, and chocolate, of which the first and last were excellent, and the second respectable; hams, fish, eggs, toast, cakes, rolls, marmalades, etc., etc., were thrown together in noble confusion; frequently occasioning the guest, as Mr. Woods naïvely confessed, an utter confusion of mind as to which he was to attack, when all are inviting and each would be welcome.

Leaving Mrs. Willoughby in deep consultation with Mari' on the subject of this feast, we will next look after the two sweet girls whom we so abruptly deserted in the last chapter. When Maud's glowing cheeks were first visible that morning, signs of tears might have been discovered on them, as the traces of the dew are found on the leaf of the rose; but they completely vanished under the duties of the toilet, and she came forth from her chamber bright and cloudless as the glorious May morning which had returned to cheer the solitude of the manor. Beulah followed, tranquil, bland, and mild as the day itself, the living image of the purity of soul and deep affections of her honest nature.

The sisters went into the breakfast-room, where they had little lady-like offices of their own to discharge, too, in honor of the guest; each employing herself in decorating the table and seeing that it wanted nothing in the proprieties. As their pleasing tasks were fulfilled, the discourse did not flag between them. Nothing, however, had been said that made the smallest allusion to the conversation of the past night. Neither felt any wish to revive that subject; and as for Maud, bitterly did she regret ever having broached it. At times her cheeks burned with blushes, as she recalled her words; and yet she scarce knew the reason why. The feeling of Beulah was different. She wondered her sister could ever think she was a Meredith, and not a Willoughby. At times she feared some unfortunate oversight of her own, some careless allusion or indiscreet act, might have served to remind Maud of the circumstances of her real birth. Yet there was nothing in the last likely to awaken unpleasant reflections, apart from the circumstance that she was not truly a child of the family into which she had been transplanted.

The Merediths were, at least, as honorable a family as the Willoughbys, in the ordinary worldly view of the matter; nor was Maud by any means a dependent in the way of money. Five thousand pounds, in the English funds, had been settled on her by the marriage articles of her parents; and twenty years of careful husbandry, during which every shilling had been scrupulously devoted to accumulation, had quite doubled the original amount. So far from being penniless, therefore, Maud's fortune was often alluded to by the captain, in a jocular way, as if purposely to remind her that she had the means of independence, and duties connected with it. It is true, Maud herself had no suspicion that she had been educated altogether by her "father," and that her own money had not been used for this purpose. To own the truth, she thought little about it, knew little about it, beyond the fact that she had a fortune of her own, into the possession of which she must step when she attained her majority. How she came by it, even, was a question she never asked; though there were moments when tender regrets and affectionate melancholy would come over her heart, as she thought of her natural parents and of their early deaths. Still Maud implicitly reposed on the captain and Mrs. Willoughby, as on a father and mother; and it was not owing to them, or anything connected with their love, treatment, words, or thoughts, that she was reminded that they were not so in very fact, as well as in tenderness.

"Bob will think you made these plum sweetmeats, Beulah," said Maud, with a saucy smile, as she placed a glass plate on the table—"He never thinks I can make anything of this sort; and, as he is so fond of plums, he will be certain to taste them; then you will come in for the praise!"

"You appear to think that praise he must. Perhaps he may not fancy them good."

"If I thought so, I would take them away this instant," cried Maud, standing in the attitude of one in doubt. "Bob does not think much of such things in girls, for he says ladies need not be cooks; and yet when one does make a thing of this sort, one would certainly like to have it well made."

"Set your heart at ease, Maud; the plums are delicious—much the best we ever had, and we are rather famous for them, you know. I'll answer for it, Bob will pronounce them the best he has ever tasted."

"And if he shouldn't, why should I care—that is, nor very much—about it. You know they are the first I ever made, and one may be permitted to fail on a first effort. Besides, a man may go to England, and see fine sights, and live in great houses, and all that, and not understand when he has good plum sweetmeats before him, and when bad. I dare say there are many colonels in the army who are ignorant on this point."

Beulah laughed, and admitted the truth of the remark; though, in her secret mind, she had almost persuaded herself that Bob knew everything.

"Do you not think our brother improved in appearance, Maud?" she asked, after a short pause. "The visit to England has done him that service, at least."

"I don't see it, Beulah—I see no change. To me, Bob is just the same to-day, that he has ever been; that is, ever since he grew to be a man—with boys, of course, it is different. Ever since he was made a captain, I mean."

As Major Willoughby had reached that rank the day he was one-and-twenty, the reader can understand the precise date when Maud began to take her present views of his appearance and character.

"I am surprised to hear you say so, Maud! Papa says he is better 'set up,' as he calls it, by his English drill, and that he looks altogether more like a soldier than he did."

"Bob has always had a martial look!" cried Maud, quickly—"He got that in garrison, when a boy."

"If so, I hope he may never lose it!" said the subject of the remark himself, who had entered the room unperceived, and overheard this speech. "Being a

soldier, one would wish to look like what he is, my little critic."

The kiss that followed, and that given to Beulah, were no more than the usual morning salutations of a brother to his sisters, slight touches of rosy cheeks; and yet Maud blushed; for, as she said to herself, she had been taken by surprise.

"They say listeners never hear good of themselves," answered Maud, with a vivacity that betokened confusion. "Had you come a minute sooner, Master Bob, it might have been an advantage."

"Oh! Beulah's remarks I do not fear; so long as I get off unscathed from yours, Miss Maud, I shall think myself a lucky fellow. But what has brought me and my training into discussion this morning?"

"It is natural for sisters to speak about their brother after so long——"

"Tell him nothing about it, Beulah," interrupted Maud. "Let him listen, and eavesdrop, and find out as he may, if he would learn our secrets. There, Major Willoughby, I hope that is a promise of a breakfast, which will satisfy even your military appetite?"

"It looks well, indeed, Maud—and there, I perceive, are some of Beulah's excellent plums, of which I am so fond—I know they were made especially for me, and I must kiss you, sister, for this proof of remembrance."

Beulah, to whose simple mind it seemed injustice to appropriate credit that belonged to another, was about to tell the truth; but an imploring gesture from her sister induced her to smile, and receive the salute in silence.

"Has any one seen Captain Willoughby and Parson Woods this morning?" inquired the major. "I left them desperately engaged in discussion, and I really feel some apprehension as to the remains left on the field of battle."

"Here they both come," cried Maud, glad to find the discourse taking so complete a change; "and there is mamma, followed by Pliny, to tell Beulah to take her station at the coffee, while I go to the chocolate, leaving the tea to the only hand that can make it so that my father will drink it."

The parties mentioned entered the room, in the order named; the usual salutations followed, and all took their seats at table. Captain Willoughby was silent and thoughtful at first, leaving his son to rattle on, in a way that betokened care in his view of the matter, quite as much as it betokened light-heartedness in those of his mother and sisters. The chaplain was rather more communicative than his friend; but he, too, seemed restless, and desirous of arriving at some point that was not likely to come uppermost in such a family party. At length, the impulses of Mr. Woods got the better of his discretion even, and he could conceal his thoughts no longer.

"Captain Willoughby," he said, in a sort of apologetic, yet simple and natural manner, "I have done little since we parted seven hours since, but think of the matter under discussion."

"If you have, my dear Woods, there has been a strong sympathy between us; I have scarcely slept. I may say I have thought of nothing else myself, and am glad you have broached the subject again."

"I was about to say, my worthy sir, that reflection, and my pillow, and your sound and admirable arguments have produced an entire change in my sentiments. I think, now, altogether with you."

"The devil you do, Woods!" cried the captain, looking up from his bit of dry toast in astonishment. "Why, my dear fellow—this is odd—excessively odd, if the truth must be said. To own the real state of the case, chaplain, you have won me over, and I was just about to make proper acknowledgements of your victory!"

It need scarcely be added that the rest of the company were not a little amazed at these cross concessions, while Maud was exceedingly amused. As for Mrs. Willoughby, nothing laughable ever occurred in connection with her husband; and then she would as soon think of assailing the church itself as to ridicule one of its ministers. Beulah could see nothing but what was right in her father, at least; and as for the major, he felt

too much concerned at this unexpected admission of his father's to perceive anything but the error.

"Have you not overlooked the injunction of Scripture, my excellent friend?" rejoined the chaplain. "Have you left to the rights of Cæsar all their weight and authority? 'The King's name is a tower of strength.'"

"Have not you, Woods, forgotten the superior claims of reason and right over those of accident and birth—that man is to be considered as a reasoning being, to be governed by principles and ever-varying facts, and not a mere animal left to the control of an instinct that perishes with its usefulness."

"What can they mean, mother?" whispered Maud, scarce able to repress the laughter that came so easily to one with a keen sense of the ludicrous.

"They have been arguing about the right of Parliament to tax the Colonies, I believe, my dear, and over-persuaded each other, that's all. It is odd, Robert, that Mr. Woods should convert your father."

"No, my dearest mother, it is something even more serious than that." By this time the disputants, who sat opposite each other, were fairly launched into the discussion again, and heeded nothing that passed. "No, dearest mother, it is far worse than even that. Pliny, tell my man to brush the hunting-jacket—and see he has his breakfast in good style—he is a grumbling rascal, and will give the house a bad character, else—you need not come back until we ring for you—yes, mother, yes, dearest girls, this is a far more serious matter than you suppose, though it ought not to be mentioned idly among the people. God knows how they may take it—and bad news flies swift enough of itself."

"Merciful Providence!" exclaimed Mrs. Willoughby—"What can you mean, my son?"

"I mean, mother, that civil war has actually commenced in the Colonies, and that the people of your blood and race are in open arms against the people of my father's native country—in a word, against me."

"How can that be, Robert? Who would dare to strike a blow against the King?"

"When men get excited, and their passions are once inflamed, they will do much, my mother, that they might not dream of else."

"This must be a mistake! Some evil-disposed person has told you this, Robert, knowing your attachment to the crown."

"I wish it were so, dear madam; but my own eyes have seen—I may say my own flesh has felt—the contrary."

The major then related what had happened, letting his auditors into the secret of the true state of the country. It is scarcely necessary to allude to the degree of consternation and pain with which he was heard, or to the grief which succeeded.

"You spoke of yourself, dear Bob," said Maud, naturally, and with strong feeling, "you were not hurt in this cruel, cruel battle."

"I ought not to have mentioned it, although I did certainly receive a smart contusion—nothing more, I assure you—here in the shoulder, and it now scarcely inconveniences me."

By this time all were listening, curiosity and interest having silenced even the disputants, especially as this was the first they had heard of the major's casualty. Then neither felt the zeal which had warmed him in the previous contest, but was better disposed to turn aside from its pursuit.

"I hope it did not send you to the rear, Bob?" anxiously inquired the father.

"I was in the rear, sir, when I got the hurt," answered the major, laughing. "The rear is the post of honor on a retreat, you know, my dear father; and I believe our march scarce deserves another name."

"That is hard, too, on king's troops! What sort of fellows had you to oppose, my son?"

"A rather intrusive set, sir. Their object was to persuade us to go into Boston as fast as possible; and it was a little difficult at times not to listen to their argu-

ments. If my Lord Percy had not come out with a strong party and two pieces of artillery, we might not have stood it much longer! Our men were fagged like hunted deer, and the day proved oppressively hot."

"Artillery, too!" exclaimed the captain; his military pride reviving a little, to unsettle his last convictions of duty. "Did you open your columns and charge your enemies in line?"

"It would have been charging air. No sooner did we halt than our foes dispersed; or no sooner did we renew the march than every line of wall along our route became a line of hostile muskets. I trust you will do us justice, sir—you know the regiments, and can scarce think they misbehaved."

"British troops seldom do that; although I have known it happen. No men, however, are usually more steady, and then these provincials are formidable as skirmishers. In that character I know them too. What has been the effect of all this on the country, Bob? You told us something of it last night; complete the history."

"The provinces are in a tumult. As for New England, a flame of fire could scarce be more devastating; though I think this colony is less excited. Still here, men are arming in thousands."

"Dear me—dear me," ejaculated the peacefully-inclined chaplain—"that human beings can thus be inclined to self-destruction!"

"Is Tryon active? What do the royal authorities all this time?"

"Of course they neglect nothing feasible; but they must principally rely on the loyalty and influence of the gentry until succor can arrive from Europe. If that fail them, their difficulties will be much increased."

Captain Willoughby understood his son; he glanced toward his unconscious wife, as if to see how far she felt with him.

"Our own families are divided, of course, much as they have been in the previous discussions," he added. "The De Lanceys, Van Cortlandts, Philipses, Bayards, and most of that town connection, with a large portion of the Long Island families, I should think, are with the crown; while the Livingstons, Morrises, Schuylers, Rensselaers, and their friends, go with the colony. Is not this the manner in which they are divided?"

"With some limitations, sir. All the De Lanceys, with most of their strong connections and influence, are with us—with the King, I mean—while all the Livingstons and Morrises are against us. The other families are divided—as with the Cortlandts, Schuylers and Rensselaers. It is fortunate for the Patroon that he is a boy."

"Why so, Bob?" asked the captain, looking inquiringly up at his son.

"Simply, sir, that his great estate may not be confiscated. So many of his near connections are against us that he could hardly escape the contamination, and the consequences would be inevitable."

"Do you consider that so certain, sir? As there are two sides to the question, may there not be two results to the war?"

"I think not, sir. England is no power to be defied by colonies insignificant as these."

"This is well enough for a king's officer, Major Willoughby; but all large bodies of men are formidable when they are right; and nations—these colonies are a nation in extent and number—are not so easily put down, when the spirit of liberty is up and doing among them."

The major listened to his father with pain and wonder. The captain spoke earnestly, and there was a flush about his fine countenance that gave it sternness and authority. Unused to debate with his father, especially when the latter was in such a mood, the son remained silent, though his mother, who was thoroughly loyal in her heart—meaning loyal as applied to a sovereign—and who had the utmost confidence in her husband's tenderness and consideration for herself, was not so scrupulous.

"Why, Willoughby," she cried, "you really incline to rebellion! I, even I, who was born in the colonies, think them very

wrong to resist their anointed king and prince."

"Ah, Wilhelmina," answered the captain, more mildly, "you have a true colonist's admiration of home. But I was old enough when I left England to appreciate what I saw and knew, and cannot feel all this provincial admiration."

"But, surely, my dear captain, England is a very great country," interrupted the chaplain—"a prodigious country; one that can claim all our respect and love. Look at the church, now, the purified continuation of the ancient visible authority of Christ on earth! It is the consideration of this church that has subdued my natural love of birthplace, and altered my sentiments."

"All very true, and all very well in your mouth, chaplain; yet even the visible church may err. This doctrine of divine right would have kept the Stuarts on the throne, and it is not even English doctrine, much less then need it be American. I am no Cromwellian, no republican, that wishes to oppose the throne, in order to destroy it. A good king is a good thing, and a prodigious blessing to a country; still a people needs look to its political privileges if it wish to preserve them. You and I will discuss this matter another time, parson. There will be plenty of opportunities," he added, rising, and smiling good-humoredly; "I must now call my people together and let them know this news. It is not fair to conceal a civil war."

"My dear sir!" exclaimed the major, in concern, "are you not wrong?—precipitate, I mean. Is it not better to preserve the secret, to give yourself time for reflection, to await events? I can discover no necessity for this haste. Should you see things differently hereafter, an incautious word uttered at this moment might bring much motive for regret."

"I have thought of all this, Bob, during the night—for hardly did I close my eyes—and you cannot change my purpose. It is honest to let my people know how matters stand; and so far from being hazardous, as you seem to think, I consider it wise. God knows what time will bring forth; but in every or any event, fair-dealing can scarcely injure him who practices it. I have already sent directions to have the whole settlement collected on the lawn, at the ringing of the bell, and I expect every moment we shall hear the summons."

Against this decision there was no appeal. Mild and indulgent, as the captain habitually was, his authority was not to be disputed when he chose to exercise it. Some doubts arose, and the father participated in them for a moment, as to what might be the effect on the major's fortunes; for, should a very patriotic spirit arise among the men, two-thirds of whom were native Americans, and what was more, from the eastern colonies, he might be detained, or at least betrayed on his return, and delivered into the hands of the revolted authorities. This was a very serious consideration, and it detained the captain in the house some time after the people were assembled, debating the chances in the bosom of his own family.

"We exaggerate the danger," the captain at length exclaimed. "Most of these men have been with me for years, and I know not one among them who I think would wish to injure me, or even you, my son, in this way. There is far more danger in attempting to deceive them than in making them confidants. I will go out and tell the truth, then we shall at least have the security of self-approbation. If you escape the danger of being sold by Nick, my son, I think you have little to fear from any other."

"By Nick!" repeated half a dozen voices, in surprise. "Surely, father—surely, Willoughby—surely, my dear captain, you cannot suspect as old and tried a follower as the Tuscarora!"

"Aye, he is an old follower, certainly, and he has been punished often enough, if he has not been tried. I have never suffered my distrust of that fellow to go to sleep—it is unsafe with an Indian, unless you have a strong hold on his gratitude."

"But, Willoughby, he it was who found this manor for us," rejoined the wife. "Without him we should never have been the owners of this lovely place, this beaver-

dam, and all else that we so much enjoy."

"True, my dear; and without good golden guineas we should not have had Nick."

"But, sir, I pay as liberally as he can wish," observed the major. "If bribes will buy him, mine are as good as another's."

"We shall see: under actual circumstances I think we shall be in every respect safer, by keeping nothing back—by telling all to the people."

The captain now put on his hat, and issued through the undefended gateway, followed by every individual of his family. As the summons had been general, when the Willoughbys and the chaplain appeared on the lawn, every living soul of that isolated settlement, even to infants in the arms, was collected there. The captain commanded the profound respect of all his dependents, though a few among them did not love him. The fault was not his, however, but was inherent rather in the untoward characters of the disaffected themselves. His habits of authority were unsuited to their habits of a presuming equality, perhaps; and it is impossible for the comparatively powerful and affluent to escape the envy and repinings of men, who, unable to draw the real distinctions that separate the gentleman from the low-minded and groveling, impute their advantages to accidents and money. But, even the few who permitted this malign and corrupting tendency to influence their feelings, could not deny that their master was just and benevolent, though he did not always exhibit this justice and benevolence precisely in the way best calculated to soothe their own craving self-love and exaggerated notions of assumed natural claims.

In a word, Captain Willoughby, in the eyes of a few unquiet and bloated imaginations among his people, was obnoxious to the imputation of pride; and this because he saw and felt the consequences of education, habits, manners, opinions and sentiments that were hidden from those who not only had no perception of their existence, but who had no knowledge whatever of the qualities that brought them into being. Pope's familiar line of "What can we reason but from what we know?" is peculiarly applicable to persons of this class; who are ever for dragging all things down to standards created by their own ignorance; and who, slaves of the basest and meanest passions, reason as if they were the possessors of all the knowledge, sensibilities, and refinements of their own country and times. Of this class of men comes the ordinary demagogue, a wretch equally incapable of setting an example of any of the higher qualities in his own person or practice, and of appreciating it when exhibited by others. Such men abound under all systems where human liberty is highly privileged, being the moral fungi of freedom, as the rankest weeds are known to be the troublesome and baneful productions of the richest soils.

It was no unusual thing for the people of the Hutted Knoll to be collected in the manner we have described. We are writing of a period that the present enlightened generation is apt to confound with the darker ages of American knowledge, in much that relates to social usages at least, though it escaped the long-buried wisdom of the Mormon bible, and Miller's interpretations of the prophecies. In that day, men were not so silly as to attempt to appear always wise, but some of the *fetes* and festivals of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors were still tolerated among us; the all-absorbing and all-swallowing jubilee of "Independence Day" not having yet overshadowed everything else in the shape of a holiday. Now, Captain Willoughby had brought with him to the colonies the love of festivals that is so much more prevalent in the old world than in the new; and it was by no means an uncommon thing for him to call his people together to make merry on a birthday, or the anniversary of some battle in which he had been one of the victors. When he appeared on the lawn, on the present occasion, therefore, it was expected he was about to meet them with some such announcement.

The inhabitants of the manor, or the estate of the Hutted Knoll, might be di-

vided into three great physical, and we might add moral categories, or races, viz., the Anglo-Saxon, the Dutch, both high and low, and the African. The first was the most numerous, including the families of the millers, most of the mechanics, and that of Joel Strides, the land overseer; the second was composed chiefly of laborers; and the last were exclusively household servants, with the exception of one of the Plinies, who was a plowman, though permitted to live with his kinsfolk in the Hut. These divisions, Maud, in one of her merry humors, had nicknamed the three tribes; while her father, to make the enumeration complete, had classed the sergeant, Mike, and Jamie Allen, as supernumeraries.

The three tribes, and the three supernumeraries, then, were all collected on the lawn, as the captain and his family approached. By a sort of secret instinct, too, they had divided themselves into knots, the Dutch keeping a little aloof from the Yankees; and the blacks, almost as a matter of religion, standing a short distance in the rear, as became people of their color and slaves. Mike and Jamie, however, had got a sort of neutral position between the two great divisions of the whites, as if equally indifferent to their dissensions or antipathies. In this manner all parties stood, impatiently awaiting an annnouncement that had been so long delayed. The captain advanced to the front, and removing his hat, a ceremony he always observed on similar occasions, and which had the effect to make his listeners imitate his own courtesy, he addressed the crowd.

"When people live together in a wilderness like this," commenced the captain, "there ought to be no secrets between them, my friends, in matters that touch the common interests. We are like men on a remote island: a sort of colony of our own; and we must act fairly and frankly by each other. In this spirit, then, I am now about to lay before you all that I know myself, concerning an affair of the last importance to the colonies, and to the empire." Here Joel pricked up his ears and cast a knowing glance at "the miller," a countryman and early neighbor of his own, who had charge of the grinding for the settlement, and who went by that appellation *par excellence!* "You all know," continued the captain, "that there have been serious difficulties between the colonies and Parliament, now for more than ten years; difficulties that have been, once or twice, partially settled, but which have as often broken out, in some new shape, as soon as an old quarrel was adjusted."

Here the captain paused a moment, and Joel, who was the usual spokesman of "the people," took an occasion to put a question.

"The captain means, I s'pose," he said, in a sly, half honest, half jesuitical manner, "the right of a Parliament to tax us Americans, without our own consent or our having any members in their Legislatoore?"

"I mean what you say. The tax on tea, the shutting the port of Boston, and other steps, have brought larger bodies of the King's troops among us than have been usual. Boston, as you probably know, has had a strong garrison now for some months. About six weeks since, the Commander-in-chief sent a detachment out as far as Concord, Massachusetts, to destroy certain stores. This detachment had a meeting with the minute-men, and blood was drawn. A running fight ensued, in which several hundreds have been killed and wounded; and I think I know both sides sufficiently well to predict that a long and bloody civil war is begun. These are facts you should know, and accordingly I tell them to you."

This simple but explicit account was received very differently by the different listeners. Joel Strides leaned forward with intense interest, so as not to lose a syllable. Most of the New Englanders, or Yankees, paid great attention, and exchanged meaning glances with each other when the captain had got through. As for Mike, he grasped a shillelah that he habitually carried when not at work, looking round as if waiting for orders from the captain on whom to begin. Jamie was thoughtful and grave, and once or twice, as the captain proceeded, he

scratched his head in doubt. The Dutch seemed curious, but bewildered, gaping at each other like men who might make up their minds if you would give them time, but who certainly had not yet. As for the blacks, their eyes began to open like saucers when they heard of the quarrel; when it got to the blows, their mouths were all grinning with the delight of a thing so exciting. At the mention of the number of the dead, however, something like awe passed over them, and changed their countenances to dismay. Nick alone was indifferent. By the cold apathy of his manner the captain saw at once that the battle of Lexington had not been a secret to the Tuscarora when he commenced his own account. As the captain always encouraged a proper familiarity in his dependents, he now told them he was ready to answer any questions they might think expedient to put to him in gratification of their natural curiosity.

"I s'pose this news comes by the major?" asked Joel.

"You may well suppose that, Strides. My son is here, and we have no other means of getting it."

"Will your honor be wishful that we shouldher our fire-arms, and go out and fight one of them sides or t'other?" demanded Mike.

"I wish nothing of the sort, O'Hearn. It will be time enough for us to take a decided part when we get better ideas of what is really going on."

"Doesn't the captain then think matters have got far enough toward a head for the Americans to make up their minds conclusively, as it might be?" put in Joel in his very worst manner.

"I think it will be wiser for us all to remain where we are, and as we are. Civil war is a serious matter, Strides, and no man should rush blindly into its dangers and difficulties."

Joel looked at the miller, and the miller looked at Joel Neither said anything, however, at the time. Jamie Allen had been out in the "forty-five," when thirty years younger than he was that day; and though he had his predilections and antipathies, circumstances had taught him prudence.

"Will the Pairliament, think ye, no be bidding the soldiery to wark their will on the puir unairmed folk, up and down the country, and they not provided with the means to resist them?"

"Och, Jamie!" interrupted Mike, who did not appear to deem it necessary to treat this matter with even decent respect —"where will be yer valor and stomach, to ask sich a question as that! A man is always reathy, when he has ar-r-ms and legs free to act accorthing to natur'. What would a regiment of throops do ag'in the likes of sich a place as this? I'm sure it's tin years I've been in it, and I've niver been able to find my way out of it. Set a souldier to rowing on the lake forenent the rising sun, with orders to get to the other ind, and a pretty job he'd make of marching on that same! I knows it, for I've thried it, and it is not a new beginner that will make much of sich oars; barring he knows nothin' about them."

This was not very intelligible to anybody but Joel, and he had ceased to laugh at Mike's voyage, now, some six or seven years; divers other disasters, all having their origin in a similar confusion of ideas, having in the interval supplanted that calamity, as it might be, seriatim. Still it was an indication that Mike might be set down as a belligerent, who was disposed to follow his leader into the battle, without troubling him with many questions concerning the merits of the quarrel. Nevertheless, the County Leitrim-man acknowledged particular principles, all of which had a certain influence on his conduct, whenever he could get at them, to render them available. First and foremost, he cordially disliked a Yankee; and he hated an Englishman, both as an oppressor and a heretic; yet he loved his master and all that belonged to him. These were contradictory feelings, certainly; but Mike was all contradiction, both in theory and in practice.

The Anglo-Saxon tribe now professed a willingness to retire, promising to think of the matter, a course against which Mike loudly protested, declaring he never knew any good come of thinking, when matters had got as far as blows. Jamie, too, went

off scratching his head, and he was seen to make many pauses that day, between the shovelfuls of earth he, from time to time, threw around his plants, as if pondering on what he had heard. As for the Dutch, their hour had not come. No one expected them to decide the day they first heard of argument.

The negroes got together and began to dwell on the marvels of a battle in which so many Christians had been put to death. Little Smash placed the slain at a few thousands; but Great Smash, as better became her loftier apellation and higher spirit, affirmed that the captain had stated hundreds of thousands; a loss, with less than which, as she contended, no great battle could possibly be fought.

When the captain was housed, Sergeant Joyce demanded an audience; the object of which was simply to ask for orders, without the least reference to principles.

CHAPTER VII.

"We are all here!
Father, mother,
Sister, brother,
All who hold each other dear.
Each chair is filled—we're all at home;
To-night let no cold stranger come;
It is not often thus around
Our old familiar hearth we're found:
Bless, then, the meeting and the spot;
For once be every care forgot;
Let gentle Peace assert her power,
And kind Affection rule the hour;
We're all—all here."—SPRAGUE.

ALTHOUGH most of the people retired to their dwellings or their labors, as soon as the captain dismissed them, a few remained to receive his further orders. Among these last was Joel, the carpenter, and the blacksmith. These men now joined the chief of the settlement and his son, who had lingered near the gateway, in conversation concerning the alterations that the present state of things might render necessary, in and about the Hut.

"Joel," observed the captain, when the three men were near enough to hear his orders, "this great change in the times will render some changes in our means of defence prudent, if not necessary."

"Does the captain s'pose the people of the colony will attack us?" asked the wily overseer, with emphasis.

"Perhaps not the people of the colony, Mr. Strides, for we have not yet declared ourselves their enemies; but there are other foes, who are more to be apprehended than the people of the colony."

"I should think the King's troops not likely to trouble themselves to ventur' here—the road might prove easier to come than to return. Besides our plunder would scarce pay for such a march."

"Perhaps not—but there never has yet been a war in these colonies that some of the savage tribes were not engaged in it before the whites had fairly got themselves into line."

"Do you really think, sir, there can be much serious danger of that!" exclaimed the major in surprise.

"Beyond a question, my son. The scalping-knife will be at work in six months, if it be not busy already, should one-half of your reports and rumors turn out to be true. Such is American history."

"I rather think, sir, your apprehensions for my mother and sisters may mislead you. I do not believe the American authorities will ever allow themselves to be driven into a measure so perfectly horrible and unjustifiable; and were the English ministry sufficiently cruel or unprincipled to adopt the policy, the honest indignation of so humane a people would be certain to drive them from power."

As the major ceased speaking, he turned and caught the expression of Joel's countenance, and was struck with the look of intense interest with which the overseer watched his own warm and sincere manner.

"Humanity is a very pretty stalking-horse for political orations, Bob," quietly returned the father; "but it will scarcely count for much with an old campaigner. God send you may come out of this war with the same ingenuous and natural feelings as you go into it."

"The major will scarce dread the savages should he be on the side of his nat'ral friends!" remarked Joel; "and if what he says about the humanity of the King's advisers be true, he will be safe from them."

"The major will be on the side to which duty calls him, Mr. Strides, if it may be agreeable to your views of the matter," answered the young man, with a little more hauteur than the occasion required.

The father felt uneasy, and he regretted that his son had been so indiscreet; though he saw no remedy but by drawing the attention of the men to the matter before them.

"Neither the real wishes of the people of America, nor of the people of England, will avail much in carrying on this war," he said. "Its conduct will fall into the hands of those who will look more to the ends than to the means; and success will be found a sufficient apology for any wrong. This has been the history of all the wars of my time, and it is likely to prove the history of this. I fear it will make little difference to us on which side we may be in feeling; there will be savages to guard against in either case. This gate must be hung, one of the first things, Joel; and I have serious thoughts of placing palisades around the Knoll. The Hut, well palisaded, would make a work that could not be easily carried without artillery."

Joel seemed struck with the idea, though it did not appear that it was favorably. He stood studying the house and the massive gates for a minute or two, ere he delivered his sentiments on the subject. When he did speak, it was a good deal more in doubt than in approbation.

"It's all very true, captain," he said; "the house would seem to be a good deal more safe like if the gates were up; but a body don't know; 'sometimes gates be a security, and sometimes they isn't. It all depends on which side the danger comes. Still, as these are made and finished all to hanging, it's most a pity, too, they shouldn't be used, if a body could find time."

"The time must be found, and the gates be hung," interrupted the captain, too much accustomed to Joel's doubting, sort-o'-concluding manner, to be always patient under the infliction. "Not only the gates, but the palisades, must be got out, holes dug, and the circumvallation completed."

"It must be as the captain says, of course, he being master here. But time's precious in May. Ther's half our plantin' to be done yet, and some of the ground hasn't got the last plowin'. Harvest won't come without seed-time for no man, let him be great or let him be small—and it does seem to me a sort o' wastin' of the Lord's blessin's to be hangin' gates and diggin' holes for that—the thing the captain mentioned—when there's no visible danger in sight to recommend the measure to prudence, as it might be."

"That may be your opinion, Mr. Strides, but it is not mine. I intend to guard against a visible danger that is out of sight, and I will thank you to have these gates hung this very day."

"This very day! The captain's a mind to be musical about the matter! Every hand in the settlement couldn't get them gates in their places in less than a week."

"It appears to me, Strides, you are 'playing on the music,' as you call it, yourself, now?"

"No, indeed, Captain; them gates will have to be hung on the mechanic principle; and it will take at least two or three days for the carpenter and blacksmith to get up the works that's to do it. Then the hanging itself I should think would stand us in hand a day for each side. As for the circumvalley, what between the cuttin' and haulin', and diggin' and settin', that would occupy all hands until after first hoein'. That is, hoein' would come afore the plantin'."

"It does not appear to me, Bob, such a heavy job as Joel represents! The gates are heavy, certainly, and may take us a day or two; but, as for stockading—I've seen barracks stockaded in, in a week, if I remember right. You know something of this—what is your opinion?"

"That this house can be stockaded in, in the time you mention; and, as I have a strong reluctance to leave the family before it is in security, with your permission I will remain and superintend the work."

The offer was gladly accepted, on more accounts than one; and the captain, ac-

customed to be obeyed when he was in earnest, issued his orders forthwith, to let the work proceed. Joel, however, was excused in order that he might finish the planting he had commenced, and which a very few hands could complete within the required time. As no ditch was necessary, the work was of a very simple nature, and the major set about his portion of it without even re-entering the house.

The first thing was to draw a line for a trench some six or seven feet deep, that was to encircle the whole building, at a distance of about thirty yards from the house. This line ran on each side of the Hut, on the very verge of the declivities, rendering the flanks far more secure than the front, where it crossed the lawn on a gently inclining surface. In one hour the major had traced this line with accuracy; and he had six or eight men at work with spades digging the trench. A gang of hands was sent into the woods, with orders to cut the requisite quantity of young chestnuts; and, by noon, a load of the material actually appeared on the ground. Still, nothing was done to the gates.

To own the truth, the captain was now delighted. The scene reminded him of some in his military life, and he bustled about, giving his orders with a good deal of the fire of youth renewed, taking care, however, in no manner to interfere with the plans of his son. Mike buried himself like a mole, and had actually advanced several feet before either of the Yankees had got even a fair footing on the bottom of his part of the trench. As for Jamie Allen, he went to work with deliberation; but it was not long before his naked gray hairs were seen on a level with the surface of the ground. The digging was not hard, though a little stony, and the work proceeded with spirit and success. All that day and the next, and the next, and the next, the Knoll appeared alive, earth being cast upward, teams moving, carpenters sawing, and laborers toiling. Many of the men protested that their work was useless, unnecessary, unlawful even; but no one dared hesitate under the eyes of the major, when his father had once issued a serious command. In the meantime, Joel's planting was finished, though he made many long pauses while at work on the flats, to look up and gaze at the scene of activity and bustle that was presented at the Knoll. On the fourth day, toward evening, he was obliged to join the general "bee," with the few hands he had retained with himself.

By this time the trench was dug, most of the timber was prepared, and the business of setting up the stockade was commenced. Each young tree was cut to the length of twenty feet, and pointed at one end. Mortices, to receive cross-pieces, were cut at proper distances, and holes were bored to admit the pins. This was all the preparation, and the timbers were set in the trench, pointed ends uppermost. When a sufficient number were thus arranged, a few inches from each other, the cross-pieces were pinned on, bringing the whole into a single connected frame, or bent. The bent was then raised to a perpendicular, and secured by pounding the earth around the lower ends of the timbers. The latter process required care and judgment, and it was intrusted to the especial supervision of the deliberate Jamie; the major having discovered that the Yankees, in general, were too impatient to get on and to make a show. Sergeant Joyce was particularly useful in dressing the rows of timber and in giving the whole arrangement a military air.

"Guid wark is far better than quick wark," observed the cool-headed Scotchman, as he moved about among the men, "and it's no the fuss and bustle of acteevity that is to give the captain pleasure. The thing that is well done is done with the least noise and confusion. Set the stockades mair pairpendic'lar, my men."

"Aye, dress them too, my lads," added the venerable ex-sergeant.

"This is queer plantin', Jamie," put in Joel, "and queerer grain will come of it. Do you think those young chestnuts will ever grow ag'in, that you put them out in rows, like so much corn?"

"Now it's no for the growth we does it, Joel, but to presairve the human growth

we have. To keep the savage bairbers o' the wilderness fra' clippin' our polls before the shearin' time o' natur' has gathered us a' in for the hairvest of etairnity. They that no like the safety we're makin' for them can gang their way to ither places, where they'll find no forts or stockades to trouble their een."

"I'm not at all critical, Jamie, though to my notion a much better use for your timber plantation would be to turn it into sheds for cattle in the winter months. I can see some good in that, but none in this."

"Bad luck to ye, then, Misther Sthroddle," cried Mike, from the bottom of the trench, where he was using a pounding instrument with the zeal of a pavior. "Bad luck to the likes of ye, say I, Mister Strides. If ye've no relish for a fortification in a time of war, ye've only to shoulther yer knapsack and go out into the open counthry, where ye'll have all to yer own satisfaction. Is it forthify the house, will we? That we will, and not a hair of the missuss's head, nor of the young ladies' heads, nor of the masther's head, though he's mighty bald as it is, but not a hair of all their heads shall be harmed, while Jamie and Mike, and the bould ould sergeant here, can have their way. I wish I had the trench full of yer savages, and a gineral funeral we'd make of the vagabonds! Och! they're the divil's imps, I hear from all sides, and no love do I owe them."

"And yet you're the bosom friend of Nick, who's anything but what I call a specimen of his people."

"Is it Nick ye're afther? Well, Nick's half-civilized accorthin' to yer Yankee manners, and he's no specimen at all. Let him hear you call him by sich a name if ye want throuble."

Joel walked away muttering, leaving the laborers in doubt whether he relished least the work he was now obliged to unite in furthering, or Mike's hit at his own peculiar people. Still the work proceeded, and in one week from the day it was commenced the stockade was complete, its gate excepted. The entrance through the palisades was directly in front of that of the house, and both passages still remained open, one set of gates not being completed, and the other not yet being hung.

It was on a Saturday evening when the last palisade was placed firmly in the ground, and all the signs of the recent labor were removed, in order to restore as much of the former beauty of the Knoll as possible. It had been a busy week; so much so, indeed, as to prevent the major from holding any of that confidential intercourse with his mother and sisters, in which it had been his habit to indulge in former visits. The fatigues of the days sent everybody to their pillows early; and the snatches of discourse which passed had been affectionate and pleasant, rather than communicative. Now that the principal job was so near being finished, however, and the rubbish was cleared away, the captain summoned the family to the lawn again, to enjoy a delicious evening near the close of the winning month of May. The season was early, and the weather more bland than was usual even in that sheltered and genial valley. For the first time that year Mrs. Willoughby consented to order the tea equipage to be carried to a permanent table that had been placed under the shade of a fine elm, in readiness for any *fete champetre* of this simple character.

"Come, Wilhelmina, give us a cup of your fragrant Hyson, of which we have luckily abundance, tax or no tax. I should lose caste were it known how much American treason we have gulped down in this way; but a little tea up here in the forest can do no man's conscience any great violence in the long run. I suppose, Major Willoughby, his Majesty's forces do not disdain tea in these stirring times?"

"Far from it, sir; we deem it so loyal to drink it, that it is said the port and sherry of the different messes at Boston are getting to be much neglected. I am an admirer of tea for itself, however, caring little about its collateral qualities. Farrel"—turning to his man, who was aiding Pliny the elder in arranging the table—"when you are through here, bring out the basket you will find on the toilet in my room."

"True, Bob," observed the mother, smiling—"that basket has scarce been treated with civility. Not a syllable of thanks have I heard for all the fine things it contains."

"My mind has been occupied with care for your safety, dear mother, and that must be my excuse. Now, however, there is an appearance of security which gives one a breathing-time, and my gratitude receives a sudden impulse. As for you, Maud, I regret to be compelled to say that you stand convicted of laziness; not a single thing do I owe to your labors or recollection of me."

"Is that possible!" exclaimed the captain, who was pouring water into the teapot. "Maud is the last person I should suspect of neglect of this nature; I do assure you, Bob, no one listens to news of your promotions and movements with more interest than Maud."

Maud herself made no answer. She bent her head aside, in a secret consciousness that her sister might alone detect, and form her own conclusions concerning the color that she felt warming her cheeks. But Maud's own sensitive feelings attributed more to Beulah than the sincere and simple-minded girl deserved. So completely was she accustomed to regard Robert and Maud as brother and sister, that even all which had passed produced no effect in unsettling her opinions, or in giving her thoughts a new direction. Just at this moment Farrel came back, and placed the basket on the bench, at the side of his master.

"Now, my dearest mother, and you, girls"—the major had begun to drop the use of the word "sisters" when addressing both of the young ladies—"Now, my dearest mother, and you, girls, I am about to give each her due. In the first place, I confess my own unworthiness, and acknowledge that I do not deserve one-half the kind attention I have received in these various presents, after which we will descend to particulars."

The major then exposed every article contained in the basket, finding the words "mother" and "Beulah" pinned on each, but nowhere any indication that his younger sister had even borne him in mind. His father looked surprised at this, not to say a little grave; and he waited with evident curiosity for the gifts of Maud, as one thing after another came up, without any signs of her having recollected the absentee.

"This is odd, truly," observed the father, seriously; "I hope, Bob, you have done nothing to deserve this? I should be sorry to have my little girl affronted."

"I assure you, sir, that I am altogether ignorant of any act, and I can solemnly protest against any intention to give offence. If guilty, I now pray Maud to pardon me."

"You have done nothing, Bob—said nothing, Bob—thought nothing to offend me," cried Maud, eagerly.

"Why, then, have you forgotten him, darling, when your mother and sister have done so much in the way of recollection?" asked the captain.

"Forced gifts, my dear father, are no gifts. I do not like to be compelled to make presents."

This was uttered in a way to induce the major to throw all the articles back into the basket, as if he wished to get rid of the subject without further comment. Owing to this precipitation, the scarf was not seen. Fortunately for Maud, who was ready to burst into tears, the service of the tea prevented any further allusion to the matter.

"You have told me, major," observed Captain Willoughby, "that your old regiment has a new colonel; but you have forgotten to mention his name. I hope it is my old messmate, Tom Wallingford, who wrote me he had some such hopes last year."

"General Wallingford has got a light dragoon regiment—General Meredith has my old corps; he is now in this country, at the head of one of Gates's brigades."

It is a strong proof of the manner in which Maud—Maud Willoughby, as she was ever termed—had become identified with the family of the Hutted Knoll, that, with two exceptions, not a person thought of her when the name of this General Meredith was mentioned; though, in

truth, he was the uncle of her late father. The exceptions were the major and herself. The former now never heard the name without thinking of his beautiful little playfellow, and nominal sister; while Maud, of late, had become curious and even anxious on the subject of her natural relatives. Still a feeling akin to awe, a sentiment that appeared as if it would be doing violence to a most solemn duty, prevented her from making any allusion to her change of thought, in the presence of those, whom, during childhood, she had viewed only as her nearest relatives, and who still continued so to regard her. She would have given the world to ask Bob a few questions concerning the kinsman he had mentioned, but could not think of doing so before her mother, whatever she might be induced to attempt with the young man when by himself.

Nick next came strolling along, gazing at the stockade, and drawing near the table with an indifference to persons and things that characterized his habits. When close to the party he stopped, keeping his eye on the recent works.

"You see, Nick, I am about to turn soldier again in my old days," observed the captain. "It is now many years since you and I have met within a line of palisades. How do you like our work?"

"What you make him for, cap'in?"

"So as to be secure against any redskins who may happen to long for our scalps."

"Why want your scalp? Hatchet hasn't been dug up a-tween us—bury him so deep can't find him in ten, two, six year."

"Ay, it has long been buried, it is true; but you red gentlemen have a trick of digging it up with great readiness when there is any occasion for it. I suppose you know, Nick, that there are troubles in the colonies?"

"Tell Nick all about him,"—answered the Indian evasively—"no read—no hear—don't talk much—talk most wid Irisher—can't understand what he want—say t'ing one way, den say him anoder."

"Mike is not very lucid, of a certainty," rejoined the captain, laughing, all the party joining in the merriment—"but he is a sterling good fellow, and is always to be found in time of need."

"Poor rifle—nebber hit—shoot one way, look t'other!"

"He is no great shot, I will admit; but he is a famous fellow with a shillaleh. Has he given you any of the news?"

"All he say, news—much news ten time, as one time. Cap'in lend Nick a quarter dollar yesterday."

"I did lend you a quarter, certainly, Nick; and I supposed it had gone to the miller for rum, before this. What am I to understand by your holding it out in this manner?—and you mean to repay me?"

"Sartin—good quarter—just like him cap'in lent Nick. Like as one pea. Nick man of honor; keep his word."

"This does look more like it than common, Nick. The money was to be returned to-day, but I did not expect to see it, so many previous contracts of that nature having been vacated, as the lawyers call it."

"Tuscarora chief always gentleman. What he say he do. Good quarter dollar dat, cap'in?"

"It is unexceptionable, old acquaintance; I'll not disdain receiving it, as it may serve for a future loan."

"No need bye'm-by—take him now—cap'in, lend Nick dollar; pay him to-morrow."

The captain protested against the sequitur that the Indian evidently wished to establish; declining, though in a good-natured way, to lend the larger sum. Nick was disappointed, and walked sullenly away, moving nearer to the stockade, with the air of an offended man.

"That is an extraordinary fellow, sir!" observed the major—"I really wonder you tolerate him so much about the Hut. It might be a good idea to banish him, now that the war has broken out."

"Which would be a thing more easily said than done. A drop of water might as readily be banished from that stream, as an Indian from any part of the forest he may choose to visit. You brought him here yourself, Bob, and should not blame us for tolerating his presence."

"I brought him, sir, because I found he recognized me even in this dress, and it was wise to make a friend of him. Then I wanted a guide, and I was well assured he knew the way if any man did. He is a surly scoundrel, however, and appears to have changed his character since I was a boy."

"If there be any change, Bob, it is in yourself. Nick has been Nick these thirty years, or as long as I have known him. Rascal he is, or his tribe would not have cast him out. Indian justice is stern, but it is natural justice. No man is ever put to the ban among the red men, until they are satisfied he is not fit to enjoy savage rights. In garrison, we always looked upon Nick as a clever knave, and treated him accordingly. When one is on his guard against such a fellow, he can do little harm, and this Tuscarora has a salutary dread of me, which keeps him in tolerable order during his visits to the Hut. The principal mischief he does here, is to get Mike and Jamie deeper in the Santa Cruz than I could wish; but the miller has his orders to sell no more rum."

"I hardly think you do Nick justice, Willoughby," observed the right-judging and gentle wife. "He has some good qualities; but you soldiers always apply martial-law to the weakness of your fellow-creatures."

"And you tender-hearted women, my dear Wilhelmina, think everybody as good as yourselves."

"Remember, Hugh, when your son, there, had the canker-rash, how actively and readily the Tuscarora went into the forest to look for the gold-thread that even the doctors admitted cured him. It was difficult to find, Robert; but Nick remembered a spot where he had seen it, fifty miles off, and without a request even from us, he traveled that distance to procure it."

"Yes, this is true"—returned the captain, thoughtfully—"though I question if the cure was owing to the gold-thread, as you call it, Wilhelmina. Every man has some good quality or other; and, I much fear, some bad ones also. But, here is the fellow coming back, and I do not like to let him think himself of sufficient consequence to be the subject of our remarks."

"Very true, sir—it adds excessively to the trouble of such fellows, to let them fancy themselves of importance."

Nick now came slowly back, after having examined the recent changes to his satisfaction. He stood a moment in silence, near the table, and then, assuming an air of more dignity than common, he addressed the captain.

"Nick ole chief," he said. "Been at Council Fire often as cap'in. Can't tell all he know; want to hear about new war."

"Why, Nick, it is a family quarrel this time. The French have nothing to do with it."

"Yengeese fight Yengeese—um?"

"I am afraid it will so turn out. Do not the Tuscaroras sometimes dig up the hatchet against the Tuscaroras?"

"Tuscarora man kill Tuscarora man—good—he quarrel, and kill he enemy. But Tuscarora warrior nebber take scalp of Tuscarora squaw and papoose! What you t'ink he do dat for? Red man no hog to eat pork."

"It must be admitted, Nick, you are a very literal logician—'dog won't eat dog,' is our English saying. Still the Yankee will fight the Yengeese, it would seem. In a word, the Great Father in England has raised the hatchet against his American children."

"How you like him, cap'in—um? Which go on straight path, which go on crooked? How you like him?"

"I like it little, Nick, and wish with all my heart the quarrel had not taken place."

"Mean to put on regimentals—hah! Mean to be cap'in again? Follow drum and fife, like old time?"

"I rather think not, old comrade. After sixty, one likes peace better than war; and I intend to stay at home."

"What for, den, build fort? Why you put fence round house, like pound for sheep?"

"Because I intend to stay there. The stockade will be good to keep off any of

every enemy who may take it into their heads to come against us. You have known me to defend a worse position than this."

"He got no gate," muttered Nick—"What he good for, without gate? Yengeese, Yankees, red man, Frenchman, walk in just as he please. No good to leave such squaw wid a door wide open."

"Thank you, Nick," cried Mrs. Willoughby. "I knew you were my friend, and have not forgotten the gold-thread."

"He very good," answered the Indian, with an important look. "Papoose get well like not'ing. He a'most die to-day; to-morrow he run about and play. Nick do him, too; cure him with gold-thread."

"Oh! you are, or were, quite a physician at one time, Nick. I remember when you had the small-pox yourself."

The Indian turned with the quickness of lightning to Mrs. Willoughby, whom he startled with his energy, as he demanded—

"You remember dat, Mrs. Cap'in! Who gib him—who cure him—um?"

"Upon my word, Nick, you almost frighten me. I fear I gave you the disease, but it was for your own good it was done. You were inoculated by myself, when the soldiers were dying around us, because they had never had that care taken of them. All I inoculated lived; yourself among the number."

The startling expression passed away from the fierce countenance of the savage, leaving in its place another so kind and amicable as to prove he not only was aware of the benefit he had received, but that he was deeply grateful for it. He drew near to Mrs. Willoughby, took her still white and soft hand in his own sinewy and dark fingers, then dropped the blanket, that he had thrown carelessly across his body, from a shoulder, and laid it on a mark left by the disease, by way of pointing to her good work. He smiled as this was done.

"Ole mark," he said, nodding his head—"sign we good friend—he nebber go away while Nick live."

touched the captain's heart, and he tossed a dollar toward the Indian, who suffered it, however, to lie at his feet unnoticed. Turning to the stockade he pointed significantly to the open gateways.

"Great danger go t'rough little 'ole," he said, sententiously, walking away as he concluded, "Why you leave big 'ole open?"

"We must get those gates hung next week," said the captain, positively; "and yet it is almost absurd to apprehend anything serious in this remote settlement, and that at so early a period in the war."

Nothing further passed on the lawn worthy to be recorded. The sun set and the family withdrew into the house, as usual, to the overseeing care of Divine Providence, throughout a night passed in the wilderness. By common consent, the discourse turned upon things noway connected with the civil war, or its expected results, until the party was about to separate for the night, when the major found himself alone with his sisters, in his own little parlor, dressing room, or study, whatever the room adjoining his chamber could properly be called.

"You will not leave us soon, Robert?" said Beulah, taking her brother's hand with confiding affection. "I hardly think my father young and active enough, or rather alarmed enough, to live in times like these!"

"He is a soldier, Beulah, and a good one; so that his son can teach him nothing. I wish I could say that he is as good a subject; I fear he leans to the side of the colonies."

"Heaven be praised!" exclaimed Beulah—"Oh! that his son would incline in the same direction."

"Nay, Beulah," rejoined Maud, reproachfully; "you speak without reflection. Mamma bitterly regrets that papa sees things in the light he does. She thinks the Parliament right and the colonies wrong."

"What a thing is a civil war!" ejaculated the major—"Here is husband divided against wife—son against father—brother against sister. I could almost wish I were dead, ere I had lived to see this!"

"Nay, Robert, it is not so bad as that, either, added Maud. "My mother will never oppose my father's will or judgment. Good wives, you know, never no that. She will only pray that he may decide right,and in a way that his children will never have cause to regret. As for me, I count for nothing, of course."

"And Beulah, Maud; is she nothing, too? Here will Beulah be praying for her brother's defeat, throughout this war. It has been some presentiment of this difference of opinion that has probably induced you to forget me, while Beulah and my mother were passing so many hours to fill that basket."

"Perhaps you do Maud injustice, Robert," said Beulah, smiling. "I think I can say none loves you better than our dear sister—or no one has thought of you more, in your absence."

"Why, then, does the basket contain no proof of this remembrance—not even a chain of hair—a purse, or a ring—nothing, in short, to show that I have not been forgotten, when away."

"Even if this be so," said Maud, with spirit, "in what am I worse than yourself? What proof is there that you have remembered us?"

"This," answered the major, laying before his sisters two small packages, each marked with the name of its proper owner. "My mother has hers, too, and my father has not been forgotten."

Beulah's exclamations proved how much she was gratified with her presents; principally trinkets and jewelry, suited to her years and station. First kissing the major, she declared her mother must see what she had received, before she retired for the night, and hurried from the room. That Maud was not less pleased, was apparent by her glowing cheeks and tearful eyes; though, for a wonder, she was far more restrained in the expression of her feelings. After examining the different articles with pleasure, for a minute or two, she went with a quick impetuous movement to the basket, tumbled all the contents on the table, until she reached the scarf, which she tossed toward the major, saying, with a faint laugh—

"There, unbeliever—heathen—is that nothing? Was that made in a minute, think you?"

"This!" cried the major, opening the beautiful, glossy fabric in surprise. "Is not this one of my father's old sashes to which I have fallen heir, in the order of nature?"

Maud dropped her trinkets, and seizing two corners of the sash, she opened it, in a way to exhibit its freshness and beauty.

"Is this old or worn?" she asked, reproachfully. "Your father never even saw it, Bob. It has not yet been around the waist of man."

"It is not possible! This would be the work of months—it is so beautiful—you cannot have purchased it."

Maud appeared distressed at his doubts. Opening the folds still wider, she raised the center of the silk to the light, and pointed to certain letters that had been wrought into the fabric so ingeniously as to escape ordinary observation, and yet so plainly as to be distinctly legible when the attention was once drawn to them. The Major took the sash into his own hands altogether, held it open before the candles, and read the words "Maud Meredith" aloud. Dropping the sash, he turned to seek the face of the donor, but she had fled the room. He followed her footsteps and entered the library just as she was about to escape from it by a different door.

"I am offended at your incredulity," said Maud, making an effort to laugh away the scene, "and will not remain to hear lame excuses. Your new regiment can have no nature in it, or brothers would not treat sisters thus."

"Maud Meredith is not my sister," he said, earnestly, "though Maud Willoughby may be. Why is the name Meredith?"

"As a retort to one of your own allusions. Did you not call me Miss Meredith one day when I last saw you in Albany?"

"Ay, but that was in jest, my dearest Maud. It was not a deliberate thing, like the name on that sash."

"Oh! jokes may be premeditated as well as murder; and many a one is mur-

dered, you know. Mine is a prolonged jest."

"Tell me, does my mother—does Beulah know who made this sash?"

"How else could it have been made, Bob? Do you think I went into the woods and worked by myself, like some romantic damsel who had an unmeaning secret to keep against the curious eyes of persecuting friends!"

"I know not what I thought—scarce know what I think now. But my mother—does she know of this name?"

Maud blushed to the eyes; but the habit and the love of truth were so strong in her that she shook her head in the negative.

"Nor Beulah? She, I am certain, would not have permitted 'Meredith' to appear where 'Willoughby' should have been."

"Nor Beulah, either, Major Willoughby," pronouncing the name with an affectation of reverence. "The honor of the Willoughbys is thus preserved from every taint, and all the blame must fall on poor Maud Meredith."

"You dislike the name of Willoughby, then, and intend to drop it in future. I have remarked that you sign yourself only 'Maud,' in your last letters. Never before, however, did I suspect the reason."

"Who wishes to live forever an impostor? It is not my legal name, and I shall soon be called on to perform legal acts. Remember, Mr. Robert Willoughby, I am twenty. When it comes to pounds, shillings, and pence, I must not forge. A little habit is necessary to teach me the use of my own *bona fide* signature."

"But ours—the name is not hateful to you—you do not throw it aside seriously, forever?"

"Yours! What, the honored name of my dear, dearest father—of my mother—of Beulah—of yourself, Bob!"

Maud did not remain to terminate her speech. Bursting into tears, she vanished.

CHAPTER VIII.

"The village tower—'tis joy to me!—I cry, the Lord is here!
The village bells! They fill the soul with ecstasy sincere.
And thus I sing, the light hath shined to lands in darkness hurled,
Their song is now in all the earth, their words throughout the world." —COXE.

ANOTHER night is passed in peace within the settlement of the Hutted Knoll. The following morning was the Sabbath, and it came forth, balmy, genial, and mild, worthy of the great festival of the Christian world. On the subject of religion, Captain Willoughby was a little of a martinet, understanding by liberty of conscience the right of improving by the instruction of those ministers who belonged to the Church of England. Several of his laborers had left him because he refused to allow of any other ministrations on his estate, his doctrine being that every man had a right to do as he pleased in such matters; and as he did not chose to allow of schism within the sphere of his own influence, if others desired to be schismatics they were at liberty to go elsewhere in order to indulge their tastes. Joel Strides and Jamie Allen were both disaffected to this sort of orthodoxy, and they had frequent private discussions on its propriety; the former in his usual wily and jesuitical mode of sneering and insinuating, and the latter respectfully as related to his master, but earnestly as it concerned his conscience. Others too were dissentients, but with less repining—though occasionally they would stay away from Mr. Wood's services. Mike alone took an open and manly stand in the matter, and he a little out-Heroded Herod; or in other words, he exceeded the captain in strictness of construction. On the very morning we have just described, he was present at a discussion between the Yankee overseer and the Scotch mason, in which these two dissenters, the first a congregationalist, and the last a seceder, were complaining of the hardships of a ten years' abstinence, during which no spiritual provender had been fed out to them from a proper source. The Irishman broke out upon the complaints in a way

that will at once let the reader into the secret of the County Leitrim-man's principles, if he has any desire to know them.

"Bad luck to all sorts of religion but the right one!" cried Mike, in a most tolerant spirit.

"Who d'ye think will be wishful of hearing mass and pr'aching that comes from any of your heretick parsons? Ye're as dape in the mire yerselves as Mr. Woods is in the woods, and no one to lade ye out of either, but an evil spirit that would rather see all mankind br'iling in agony, than dancing at a fair."

"Go to your confessional, Mike," returned Joel, with a sneer. "It's a month or more sin' you seen it, and the priest will think you have forgotten him, and go away offended."

"Och! it's such a praist as the likes of yee has no nade of throubling! Yer conscience is aisy, Mr. Straddle, so that yer belly is filled and yer wages is paid. Bad luck to such religion!"

The allusion of Joel related to a practice of Michael's that is deserving of notice. It seems that the poor fellow, excluded by his insulated position from any communication with a priest of his own church, was in the habit of resorting to a particular rock in the forest, where he would kneel and acknowledge his sins, very much as he would have done had the rock been a confessional containing one authorized to grant him absolution. Accident revealed the secret, and from that time Michael's devotion was a standing jest among the dissenters of the valley. The County Leitrim-man was certainly a little too much addicted to Santa Cruz, and he was accused of always visiting his romantic chapel after a debauch. Of course he was but little pleased with Joel's remark on the present occasion, and being like a modern newspaper, somewhat more vituperative than logical, he broke out as related.

"Jamie," continued Joel, too much accustomed to Mike's violence to heed it, "it does seem to me a hardship to be obliged to frequent a church of which a man's conscience can't approve. Mr. Woods, though a native colonist, is an Old England parson, and he has so many popish ways about him, that I am under considerable concern of mind"—concern of itself was not sufficiently emphatic for one of Joel's sensitive feelings—"I am under considerable concern of mind about the children. They sit under no other preaching; and though Lyddy and I do all we can to gainsay the sermons as soon as meetin' is out, some of it will stick. You may worry the best Christian into idolatry and unbelief, by parseverance and falsehood. Now that things look so serious too, in the colonies, we ought to be most careful."

Jamie did not clearly understand the application of the present state of the colonies, nor had he quite made up his mind touching the merits of the quarrel between Parliament and the Americans. As between the Stuarts and the House of Hanover, he was for the former, and that mainly because he thought them Scotch, and it was surely a good thing for a Scotchman to govern England; but, as between the Old countries and the New, he was rather inclined to think the rights of the first ought to predominate, there being something opposed to natural order, agreeably to his notions, in permitting the reverse of this doctrine to prevail. As for Presbyterianism, however, even in the mitigated form of New England church government, he deemed it to be so much better than episcopacy, that he would have taken up arms, old as he was, for the party that it could be made to appear was fighting to uphold the last. We have no wish to mislead the reader. Neither of the persons mentioned, Mike included, actually knew anything of the points in dispute between the different sects or churches mentioned; but only fancied themselves in possession of the doctrines, traditions, and authorities connected with the subject. These fancies, however, served to keep alive a discussion that soon had many listeners; and never before since his first ministration in the valley, did Mr. Woods meet as disaffected a congregation as on this day.

The church of the Hutted Knoll, or, as the clergyman more modestly termed it, the chapel, stood in the center of the

meadows, on a very low swell of their surface, where a bit of solid dry ground had been discovered, fit for such a purpose. The principal object had been to make it central; though some attention had been paid also to the picturesque. It was well shaded with young elms, just then opening into leaf; and about a dozen graves, principally of very young children, were memorials of the mortality of the settlement. The building was of stone, the work of Jamie Allen's own hands, but small, square, with a painted roof, and totally without tower or belfry. The interior was of unpainted cherry, and through a want of skill in the mechanics, had a cold and raw look, little suited to the objects of the structure. Still, the small altar, the desk and the pulpit, and the large square-curtained pew of the captain, the only one the house contained, were all well ornamented with hangings, or cloth, and gave the place somewhat of an air of clerical comfort and propriety. The rest of the congregation sat on benches, with kneeling-boards before them. The walls were plastered, and, a proof that parsimony had no connection with the simple character of the building, and a thing almost as unusual in America at that period as it is to-day in parts of Italy, the chapel was entirely finished.

It has been said that the morning of the particular Sabbath at which we have now arrived was mild and balmy. The sun of the forty-third degree of latitude poured out its genial rays upon the valley, gilding the tender leaves of the surrounding forest with such touches of light as are best known to the painters of Italy. The fineness of the weather brought nearly all the working people of the settlement to the chapel quite an hour before the ringing of its little bell, enabling the men to compare opinions afresh on the subject of the political troubles of the times, and the women to gossip about their children.

On all such occasions Joel was a principal spokesman, nature having created him for a demagogue, in a small way; an office for which education had in no degree unfitted him. As had been usual with him of late, he turned the discourse on the importance of having correct information of what was going on in the inhabited parts of the country, and of the expediency of sending some trustworthy person on such an errand. He had frequently intimated his own readiness to go if his neighbors wished it.

"We're all in the dark here," he remarked, "and might stay so to the end of time without some one to be relied on to tell us the news. Major Willoughby is a fine man"—Joel meant morally, not physically—"but he's a king's officer, and nat'rally feels inclined to make the best of things for the rig'lars. The captain, too, was once a soldier himself, and his feelin's turn, as it might be, unav'idably to the side he has been most used to. We are like people on a desert island, out here in the wilderness—and if ships won't arrive to tell us how matters come on, we must send one out to l'arn it for us. I'm the last man at the Dam"—so the *oi polloi* called the valley—"to say anything hard of either the captain or his son; but one is English-born and the other is English-bred; and each will make a difference in a man's feelin's."

To this proposition the miller, in particular, assented; and, for the twentieth time, he made some suggestion about the propriety of Joel's going himself, in order to ascertain how the land lay.

"You can be back by hoeing," he added, "and have plenty of time to go as far as Boston, should you wish to."

Now, while the great events were in progress, which led to the subversion of British power in America, an undercurrent of feeling, if not of incidents, was running in this valley, which threatened to wash away the foundations of the captain's authority. Joel and the miller, if not downright conspirators, had hopes, calculations, and even projects of their own, that never would have originated with men of the same class in another state of society; or, it might almost be said, in another part of the world. The sagacity of the overseer had long enabled him to foresee that the issue of the present troubles would be insurrection; and a sort of instinct which some men possess for the

strongest side, had pointed out to him the importance of being a patriot. The captain, he little doubted, would take part with the crown, and then no one knew what might be the consequences. It is not probable that Joel's instinct for the strongest side predicted the precise confiscations that subsequently ensued, some of which had all the grasping lawlessness of a gross abuse of power; but he could easily foresee that if the owner of the estate should be driven off, the property and its proceeds, probably for a series of years, would be very apt to fall under his own control and management. Many a patriot has been made by anticipations less brilliant than these; and as Joel and the miller talked the matter over between them, they had calculated all the possible emolument of fattening beeves and packing pork for hostile armies, or isolated frontier posts, with a strong gusto for the occupation. Should open war but fairly commence, and could the captain only be induced to abandon the Knoll, and take refuge within a British camp, everything might be made to go smoothly, until settling day should follow a peace. At that moment, *non est inventus* would be a sufficient answer to a demand for any balance.

"They tell me," said Joel, in an aside to the miller, "that law is as good as done with in the Bay colony, already; and you know if the law has run out there, it will quickly come to an end here. York never had much character for law."

"That's true, Joel; then you know the captain himself is the only magistrate hereabout; and, when he is away, we shall have to be governed by a committee of safety, or something of that natur'."

"A committee of safety will be the thing."

"What is a committee of safety, Joel?" demanded the miller, who had made far less progress in the arts of the demagogue than his friend, and who, in fact, had much less native fitness for the vocation; "I have heer'n tell of them regulations, but do not rightly understand 'em, a'ter all."

"You know what a committee is?" asked Joel, glancing inquiringly at his friend.

"I s'pose I do—it means men's takin' on themselves the trouble and care of public business."

"That's it—now a committee of safety means a few of us, for instance, having the charge of the affairs of this settlement, in order to see that no harm shall come to anything, especially to the people."

"It would be a good thing to have one here. The carpenter, and you, and I might be members, Joel."

"We'll talk about it another time. The corn is just planted, you know; and it has got to be hoed twice, and topped, before it can be gathered. Let us wait and see how things come on at Boston."

While this incipient plot was thus slowly coming to a head, and the congregation was gradually collecting at the chapel, a very different scene was enacting in the Hut. Breakfast was no sooner through, than Mrs. Willoughby retired to her own sitting-room, whither her son was shortly summoned to join her. Expecting some of the inquiries which maternal affection might prompt, the major proceeded to the place named with alacrity; but, on entering the room, to his great surprise he found Maud with his mother. The latter seemed grave and concerned, while the former was not entirely free from alarm. The young man glanced inquiringly at the young lady, and he fancied he saw tears struggling to break out of her eyes.

"Come hither, Robert"—said Mrs. Willoughby, pointing to a chair by her side—with a gravity that struck her son as unusual—"I have brought you here to listen to one of the old-fashioned lectures of which you got so many when a boy."

"Your advice, my dear mother—or even your reproofs—would be listened to with far more reverence and respect now than I fear they were then," returned the major, seating himself by the side of Mrs. Willoughby, and taking one of her hands affectionately in both his own. "It is only in after-life that we learn to appreciate the tenderness and care of such a

parent as you have been; though what I have done lately, to bring me in danger of the guard-house, I cannot imagine. Surely you cannot blame me for adhering to the crown in a moment like this!"

"I shall not interfere with your conscience in this matter, Robert; and my own feelings, American as I am by birth and family, rather incline me to think as you think. I have wished to see you, my son, on a different business."

"Do not keep me in suspense, mother; I feel like a prisoner who is waiting to hear his charges read. What have I done?"

"Nay, it is rather for you to tell me what you have done. You cannot have forgotten, Robert, how very anxious I have been to awaken and keep alive family affection among my children; how very important both your father and I have always deemed it; and how strongly we have endeavored to impress this importance on all your minds. The tie of family, and the love it ought to produce, is one of the sweetest of all our earthly duties. Perhaps we old people see its value more than you young; but to us the weakening of it seems like a disaster only a little less to be deplored than death."

"Dearest, dearest mother! What can you—what do you mean? What can I—what can Maud have to do with this?"

"Do not your consciences tell you both? Has there not been some misunderstanding—perhaps a quarrel—certainly a coldness between you? A mother has a quick and jealous eye; and I have seen for some time that there is not the old confidence, the free natural manner in either of you that there used to be, and which always gave your father and me so much genuine happiness. Speak, then, and let me make peace between you."

Robert Willoughby would not have looked at Maud at that moment to have been given a regiment; as for Maud herself, she was utterly incapable of raising her eyes from the floor. The former colored to the temples, a proof of consciousness, his mother fancied, while the latter's face resembled ivory as much as flesh and blood.

"If you think, Robert," continued Mrs. Willoughby, "that Maud has forgotten you, or shown pique for any little former misunderstanding during your last absence, you do her injustice. No one has done as much for you in the way of memorial: that beautiful sash being all her own work, and made of materials purchased with her own pocket-money. Maud loves you truly, too; for whatever may be the airs she gives herself while you are together, when absent, no one seems to care more for your wishes and happiness than that very willful and capricious girl."

"Mother, mother!" murmured Maud, burying her face in both her hands.

Mrs. Willoughby was woman in all her feelings, habits, and nature. No one would have been more keenly alive to the peculiar sensibilities of her sex, under ordinary circumstances, than herself; but she was now acting and thinking altogether in her character of a mother; and so long and intimately had she regarded the two beings before her in that common and sacred light, that it would have been like the dawn of a new existence for her, just then, to look upon them as not really akin to each other.

"I shall not, nor can I treat either of you as a child," she continued, "and must therefore appeal only to your own good sense to make a peace. I know it can be nothing serious, but it is painful to me to see even an affected coolness among my children. Think, Maud, that we are on the point of a war, and how bitterly you would regret it, should any accident befall your brother, and your memory not be able to recall the time passed among us in his last visit with entire satisfaction."

The mother's voice trembled, but tears no longer struggled about the eyelids of Maud. Her face was pale as death, and it seemed as if every ordinary fountain of sorrow were dried up.

"Dear Bob, this is too much!" she said, eagerly, though in husky tones. "Here is my hand—nay, here are both. Mother must not think this cruel charge is—can be true."

The major arose, approached his sister, and impressed a kiss on her cold cheek. Mrs. Willoughby smiled at these tokens of amity, and the conversation continued in a less earnest manner.

"This is right, my children," said the single-hearted Mrs. Willoughby, whose sensitive maternal love saw nothing but the dreaded consequences of weakened domestic affection; "and I shall be all the happier for having witnessed it. Young soldiers, Maud, who are sent early from their homes, have too many inducements to forget them and those they contain; and we women are so dependent on the love of the male friends, that it is wisdom in us to keep alive all the earlier ties as long and as much as possible."

"I am sure, dearest mother," murmured Maud, though in a voice that was scarcely audible, "I shall be the last to weaken this family tie. No one can feel a warmer, a more proper, a more sisterly affection for Robert than I do; he was always so kind to me when a child, and so ready to assist me, and so manly, and so everything that he ought to be, it is surprising you should have fancied there was any coldness between us!"

Major Willoughby even bent forward to listen, so intense was his curiosity to hear what Maud said; a circumstance which, had she seen it, would probably have closed her lips. But her eyes were riveted on the floor, her cheeks were bloodless, and her voice so low, that nothing but the breathless stillness he observed, would have allowed the young man to hear it, where he sat.

"You forget, mother," rejoined the major, satisfied that the last murmur had died in his ears—"that Maud will probably be transplanted into another family, one of these days, where we, who know her so well, and have reason to love her so much, can only foresee that she will form new and even stronger ties than any that accident may have formed for her here."

"Never—never," exclaimed Maud, fervently. "I can never love any as well as I love those who are in this house"

The relief she wanted stopped her voice, and bursting into tears, she threw herself into Mrs. Willoughby's arms, and sobbed like a child. The mother now motioned to her son to quit the room, while she remained herself to soothe the weeping girl, as she had so often done before, when overcome by her infantile or youthful griefs. Throughout this interview, habit and single-heartedness so exercised their influence, that the excellent matron did not, in the most remote manner, recollect that her son and Maud were not natural relatives. Accustomed, herself, to see the latter every day, and to think of her, as she had from the moment when she was placed in her arms, an infant of a few weeks old, the effect that separation might produce on others never presented itself to her mind. Major Willoughby, a boy of eight when Maud was received in the family, had known from the first her precise position, and it was perhaps morally impossible that he should not recall the circumstance in their subsequent intercourse—more especially as school, college and the army had given him so much leisure to reflect on such things, apart from the influence of family habits, while it was to be expected that a consequence of his own peculiar mode of thinking on this subject would be to produce something like a sympathetic sentiment in the bosom of Maud. Until within the last few years, however, she had been so much of a child herself, and had been treated so much like a child by the young soldier, that it was only through a change in him, that was perceptible only to herself, and which occurred when he first met her grown into womanhood, that she alone admitted any feelings that were not strictly to be referred to sisterly regard. All this, nevertheless, was a profound mystery to every member of the family but the two who were its subjects; no other thoughts than the simplest and most obvious ever suggesting themselves to the minds of the others.

In half an hour Mrs. Willoughby had quieted all Maud's present troubles, and the whole family left the house to repair to the chapel. Michael, though he had no great reverence for Mr. Wood's ministrations, had constituted himself sexton, an

office which had devolved on him in consequence of his skill with the spade. Once initiated into one branch of this duty, he had insisted on performing all the others; and it was sometimes a curious spectacle to see the honest fellow busy about the interior of the building during service, literally stopping one of his ears with a thumb, with a view, while he acquitted himself of what he conceived to be temporal obligations, to exclude as much heresy as possible. One of his rules was to refuse to commence tolling the bell until he saw Mrs. Willoughby and her daughter within a reasonable distance of the place of worship; a rule that had brought about more than one lively discussion between himself and the leveling-minded, if not heavenly-minded Joel Strides. On the present occasion, this simple process did not pass altogether without a dispute.

"Come, Mike, it's half-past ten; the people have been waiting about the meetin'-'us some time; you should open the doors and toll the bell. People can't wait forever for anybody, not even for your church."

"Then let 'em just go home ag'in, and come when they're called. Because the ould women, and the young women, and the childer, and the likes o' them, wishes to scandalize their fellow cr'atures, Christians I will not call 'em, let 'em mate in the mill or the schoolhouse, and not come forenent a church on such a business as that. Is it toll the bell, will I, before the Missus is in sight? No—not for a whole gineration of ye, Joel; and every one o' them, too, a much likelier man than ye bees yerself."

"Religion is no respecter of persons," returned the philosophical Joel. "Them that like masters and mistresses may have them for all me; but it riles me to meet with meanness."

"It does!" cried Mike, looking up to his companion with a very startling expression of wonder. "If that be true ye must be in a mighty troubled state most of the livelong day, ye must!"

"I tell you, Michael O'Hearn, religion is no respecter of persons. The Lord cares jist as much for me as he does for Captain Willoughby, or his wife, or his sons, or his darters, or anything that is his."

"Divil burn me now, Joel, if I believe that!" again cried Mike, in his dogmatic manner. "Them that understands knows the difference between mankind, and I'm sure it can be no great sacret to the Lord when it is so well known to a poor fellow like myself. There's a plenty of fellow-cr'atures that has a mighty good notion of their own excellence, but when it comes to r'ason and truth, it's no very great figure ye all make, in proving what ye say. This chapel is the master's, if chapel the heretical box can be called, and yonder bell was bought wid his money, and the rope is his; and the hands that mane to pull it is his; and so there's little use in talking ag'in rocks, and ag'in minds that's made up even harder than rocks, and to spare."

This settled the matter. The bell was not tolled until Mrs. Willoughby and her daughters had got fairly through the still unprotected gateway of the stockade, although the recent discussion of political questions had so far substituted discontent for subordination in the settlement, that more than half of those who were of New England descent had openly expressed their dissatifaction at the delay. Mike, however, was as unmoved as the little chapel itself, refusing to open the door until the proper moment had arrived, according to his own notion of the fitness of things. He then proceeded to the elm, against which the little bell was hung, and commenced tolling it with as much seriousness as if the conveyer of sounds had been duly consecrated.

When the family from the Hut entered the chapel, all the rest of the congregation were in their customary seats. This arrival, however, added materially to the audience. Great Smash and Little Smash, the two Plinies, and some five or six colored children between the ages of six and twelve following in the train of their master. For the blacks a small gallery had been built, where they could sit apart, a proscribed, if not a persecuted, race. Little did the Plinies or the Smashes, notwithstanding, think of this. Habit

had rendered their situation more than tolerable, for it had created notions and usages that would have rendered them uncomfortable in closer contact with the whites. In that day the two colors never ate together, by any accident; the eastern castes being scarcely more rigid in the observance of their rules than the people of America were on this great point. The men who would toil together, joke together, pass their days in familiar intercourse, would not sit down at the same bōard. There seemed to be a sort of contamination, according to the opinions of one of these castes, in breaking bread with the other. This prejudice often gave rise to singular scenes, more especially in the households of those who habitually labored in company with their slaves. In such families it not unfrequently happened that a black led the councils of the farm. He might be seen seated by the fire, uttering his opinions dogmatically, reasoning warmly against his own master, and dealing out his wisdom *ex cathedra*, even while he waited with patient humility when he might approach and satisfy his hunger after all of the other color had quitted the table.

Mr. Woods was not fortunate in the selection of his subject on the occasion of which we are writing. There had been so much personal activity, and so much political discussion during the past week, as to prevent him from writing a new sermon, and of course he was compelled to fall back on the other end of the barrel. The recent arguments inclined him to maintain his own opinions, and he chose a discourse that he had delivered to the garrison of which he had last been chaplain. To this choice he had been enticed by the text, which was, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," a mandate that would be far more palatable to an audience composed of royal troops, than to one which had become a good deal disaffected by the arts and arguments of Joel Strides and the miller. Still, as the sermon contained a proper amount of theological truisms, and had a sufficiency of general orthodoxy to cover a portion of its political bearing, it gave far more dissatisfaction to a few of the knowing than to the multitude. To own the truth, the worthy priest was so much addicted to continuing his regimental and garrison course of religious instruction, that his ordinary listeners would scarcely observe this tendency to loyalty, though it was far different with those who were eagerly looking for causes of suspicion and denunciation in the higher quarters.

"Well," said Joel, as he and the miller, followed by their respective families, proceeded toward the mill, where the household of the Strides were to pass the remainder of the day; "well, this is a bold sermon for a minister to preach in times like these! I kind o' guess, if Mr. Woods was down in the Bay, 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' wouldn't be doctrine to be so quietly received by every congregation. What's your notion about that Miss Strides?"

Miss Strides thought exactly as her husband thought, and the miller and his wife were not long in chiming in with her accordingly. The sermon furnished material for conversation throughout the remainder of the day at the mill, and divers conclusions were drawn from it that were ominous to the preacher's future comfort and security.

Nor did the well-meaning parson entirely escape comment in higher quarters.

"I wish, Woods, you had made choice of some other subject," observed the captain, as he and his friend walked the lawn together, in waiting for a summons to dinner. "In times like these one cannot be too careful of the political notions he throws out; and, to own the truth to you, I am more than half inclined to think that Cæsar is exercising quite as much authority in these colonies as justly falls to his share."

"Why, my dear captain, you have heard this very sermon three or four times already, and you have more than once mentioned it with commendation!"

"Ay, but that was in garrison, where one is obliged to teach subordination. I remember the sermon quite well, and a very good one it was, twenty years since, when you first preached it; but—"

"I apprehend, Captain Willoughby, that *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*. But the mandates and maxims of the Saviour are far beyond the mutations and erring passions of mortality. His sayings are intended for all times."

"Certainly, as respects their general principles and governing truths. But no text is to be interpreted without some reference to circumstances. All I mean is, that the preaching which might be very suitable to a battalion of His Majesty's Fortieth might be very unsuitable for the laborers of the Hutted Knoll; more especially so soon after what I find is called the battle of Lexington."

The summons to dinner cut short the discourse, and probably prevented a long, warm, but friendly argument.

That afternoon and evening, Captain Willoughby and his son had a private and confidential discourse. The former advised the major to rejoin his regiment without delay, unless he was prepared to throw up his commission and take sides with the colonists altogether. To this the young soldier would not listen, returning to the charge in the hope of rekindling the dormant flame of his father's loyalty.

The reader is not to suppose that Captain Willoughby's own mind was absolutely made up to fly into open rebellion. Far from it. He had his doubts and misgivings on the subjects of both principles and prudence, but he inclined strongly to the equity of the demands of the Americans. Independence or separation, if thought of at all in 1775, entered into the projects of but very few; the warmest wish of the most ardent of the whigs of the colonies being directed toward compromise, and a distinct recognition of their political franchises. The events that followed so quickly were merely the consequences of causes which once set in motion soon attained an impetus that defied ordinary human control. It was, doubtless, one of the leading incidents of the great and mysterious schemes of Divine Providence for the government of the future destinies of man, that political separation should commence in this hemisphere at that particular juncture, to be carried out ere the end of a century, to its final and natural conclusion.

But the present interview was less to debate the merits of any disputed question than to consult on the means of future intercourse, and to determine on what was best to be done at the present moment. After discussing the matter *pro* and *con*, it was decided that the major should quit the Knoll the next day, and return to Boston, avoiding Albany and those points of the country in which he would be most exposed to detection. So many persons were joining the American forces that were collecting about the besieged town that his journeying on the proper road would excite no suspicion; and once in the American camp, nothing would be easier than to find his way into the peninsula. All this young Willoughby felt no difficulty in being able to accomplish, provided he could get into the settlements without being followed by information of his real character. The period of spies, and of the severe exercise of martial law, was not yet reached; and all that was apprehended was detention. Of the last, however, there was great danger; positive certainty, indeed, in the event of discovery; and Major Willoughby had gleaned enough during his visit to feel some apprehensions of being betrayed. He regretted having brought his servant with him; for the man was a European, and by his dullness and speech might easily get them both into difficulties. So serious, indeed, was this last danger deemed by the father that he insisted on Robert's starting without the man, leaving the last to follow on the first suitable occasion.

As soon as this point was settled, there arose the question of the proper guide. Although he distrusted the Tuscarora, Captain Willoughby, after much reflection, came to the opinion that it would be safer to make an ally of him than to give him an opportunity of being employed by the other side. Nick was sent for and questioned. He promised to take the major to the Hudson, at a point between Lunenburg and Kinderhook, where he

would be likely to cross the river without awakening suspicion; his own reward to depend on his coming back to the Hutted Knoll with a letter from the major authorizing his father to pay him for his services. This plan, it was conceived, would keep Nick true to his faith, for the time being at least.

Many other points were discussed between the father and son, the latter promising, if anything of importance occurred, to find the means of communicating it to his friends at the Knoll, while Farrel was to follow his master at the end of six weeks or two months with letters from the family. Many of the captain's old army friends were now in situations of authority and command, and he sent to them messages of prudence, and admonitions to be moderate in their views, which subsequent events proved were little regarded. To General Gage he even wrote, using the precaution not to sign the letter, though its sentiments were so much in favor of the colonies that, had it been intercepted, it is most probable the Americans would have forwarded the missive to its direction.

These matters arranged, the father and son parted for the night, some time after the house clock had struck the hour of twelve.

CHAPTER IX.

"Though old in cunning, as in years,
He is so small, that like a child
In face and form the god appears,
And sportive like a boy, and wild;
Lightly he moves from place to place
In none at rest, in none content;
Delighted some new toy to chase—
On childish purpose ever bent.
Beware! to childhood's spirits gay
Is added more than childhood's power;
And you perchance may rue the hour
That saw you join his seeming play."
—GRIFFIN.

THE intention of the major to quit the Knoll that day was announced to the family at breakfast on the following morning. His mother and Beulah heard this intelligence with a natural and affectionate concern, that they had no scruples in avowing; but Maud seemed to have so schooled her feelings that the grief she really felt was under a prudent control. To her, it appeared as if her secret were constantly on the point of exposure, and she believed that would cause her instant death. To survive its shame was impossible in her eyes, and all the energies of her nature were aroused with the determination of burying her weakness in her own bosom. She had been so near revealing it to Beulah that even now she trembled as she thought of the precipice over which she had been impending, strengthening her resolution by the recollection of the danger she had run.

As a matter of necessary caution, the intended movements of the young man were kept a profound secret from all in the settlement. Nick had disappeared in the course of the night, carrying with him the major's pack, having repaired to a designated point on the stream, where he was to be joined by his fellow traveler at an hour named. There were several forest paths which led to the larger settlements. That usually traveled was in the direction of old Fort Stanwix, first proceeding north, and then taking a southeastern direction along the shores of the Mohawk. This was the route by which the major had come. Another struck the Otsego, and joined the Mohawk at a point more than once mentioned in our opening chapters. As these were the two ordinary paths—if paths they could be called, where few or no traces of footsteps were visible—it was more than probable any plan to arrest the traveler would be laid in reference to their courses. The major had consequently resolved to avoid them both, and to strike boldly into the mountains until he should reach the Susquehannah, cross that stream on its floodwood, and finding one of its tributaries that flowed in from the eastward, by following its banks to the high land which divides the waters of the Mohawk from this latter river, place himself on a route that would obliquely traverse the water-courses, which in this part of the country have all a general north or south direction. Avoiding Schenectady and Albany, he might in-

cline toward the old establishments of the descendants of the emigrants from the Palatinate on the Schoharie, and reach the Hudson at a point deemed safe for his purposes, through some of the passes of the mountains in their vicinity. He was to travel in the character of a land-owner who had been visiting his patent, and his father supplied him with a map and an old field-book, which would serve to corroborate his assumed character in the event of suspicion or arrest. Not much danger was apprehended, however, the quarrel being yet too recent to admit of the organization and distrust that subsequently produced so much vigilance and activity.

"You will contrive to let us hear of your safe arrival in Boston, Bob," observed the father, as he sat stirring his tea in a thoughtful way—"I hope to God the matter will go no further, and that our apprehensions, after all, have given this dark appearance to what has already happened."

"Ah, my dear father, you little know the state of the country through which I have so lately traveled!" answered the major, shaking his head. "An alarm of fire in an American town would scarce create more movement and not so much excitement. The colonies are alive, particularly those of New England, and a civil war is inevitable; though I trust the power of England will render it short."

"Then, Robert, do not trust yourself among the people of New England," cried the anxious mother. "Go rather to New York, where we have so many friends and so much influence. It will be far easier to reach New York than to reach Boston."

"That may be true, mother, but it will scarcely be as creditable. My regiment is in Boston, and its enemies are before Boston. An old soldier like Captain Willoughby will tell you that the major is a very necessary officer to a corps. No—no—my best course is to fall into the current of adventurers who are pushing toward Boston, and appear like one of their number, until I can get an opportunity of stealing away from them, and join my own people."

"Have a care, Bob, that you do not commit a military crime. Perhaps these provincial officers may take it into their heads to treat you as a spy, should you fall into their hands!"

"Little fear of that, sir. At present it is a sort of colonial scramble for what they fancy liberty. That they will fight, in their zeal, I know—for I have seen it; for matters have not at all gone as far as you appear to apprehend. I question if they would even stop Gage himself from going through their camp, were he outside, and did he express a desire to return."

"And yet you tell me arms and ammunition are seized all over the land; that several old half-pay officers of the King have been arrested, and put under a sort of parole!"

"Such things were talked of, certainly, though I question if they have yet been done. Luckily for yourself, under your present opinions at least, you are not on half-pay even."

"It is fortunate, Bob, though you mention it with a smile. With my present feelings I should indeed be sorry to be on half-pay, or quarter-pay, were there such a thing. I now feel myself my own master, at liberty to follow the dictates of my conscience and the suggestions of my judgment."

"Well, sir, you are a little fortunate, it must be acknowledged. I cannot see how any man can be at liberty to throw off the allegiance he owes his natural sovereign. What think you, Maud?"

This was said half in bitterness, half in jest, though the appeal at its close was uttered in a serious manner, and a little anxiously. Maud hesitated, as if to muster her thoughts, ere she replied.

"My feelings are against rebellion," she said, at length; "though I fear my reason tells me there is no such thing as a natural sovereign. If the Parliament had not given us the present family a century since, by what rule of nature would it be our princes, Bob?"

"Ah! these are some of the flights of your rich imagination, my dear Maud. It

is Parliament that has made them our princes, and Parliament, at least, is our legal, constitutional master."

"That is just the point in dispute. Parliament may be the rightful governors of England, but are they the rightful governors of America?"

"Enough," said the captain, rising from the table. "We will not discuss such a question, just as we are about to separate. Go, my son; a duty that is to be performed cannot be done too soon. Your fowling-piece and ammunition are ready for you, and I shall take care to circulate the report that you have gone to pass an hour in the woods in search of pigeons. God bless you, Bob; however we may differ in this matter—you are my son—my only son—my dear and well beloved boy. God forever bless you!"

A profound stillness succeeded this burst of nature, and then the young man took leave of his mother and the girls. Mrs. Willoughby kissed her child. She did not even weep until she was in her room. Then, indeed, she went to her knees, her tears, and her prayers. Beulah, all heart and truth as she was, wept freely on her brother's neck; but Maud, though pale and trembling, received his kiss without returning it; though she could not help saying, with a meaning that the young man had in his mind all that day, ay, and for many succeeding days—"Be careful of yourself, and run into no unnecessary dangers. God bless you, dear, dear Bob."

Maud alone followed the movements of the gentlemen with her eyes. The peculiar construction of the Hut prevented external view from the south windows; but there was a loop in a small painting-room of the garret that was especially under her charge. Thither, then, she flew, to ease her nearly bursting heart with tears, and to watch the retiring footsteps of Robert. She saw him, accompanied by his father and the chaplain, stroll leisurely down the lawn, conversing and affecting an indifferent manner, with a wish to conceal his intent to depart. The glass of the loop was open to admit the air, and Maud strained her sense of hearing, in the desire to catch, if possible, another tone of his voice. In this she was unsuccessful; though he stopped and gazed back at the Hut, as if to take a parting look. Her father and Mr. Woods did not turn, and Maud thrust her hand through the opening and waved her handkerchief. "He will think it Beulah or I," she thought, "and it may prove a consolation to him to know how much we love him." The major saw the signal and returned it. His father unexpectedly turned, and caught a glimpse of the retiring hand as it was disappearing within the loop. "That is our precious Maud," he said, without other thought than her sisterly affection. "It is her painting-room. Beulah's is on the other side of the gateway; but the window does not seem to be open."

The major started, kissed his hand fervently five or six times, and then he walked on. As if to change the conversation, he said hastily, and with a little want of connection with what had just passed—

"Yes, sir, that gate, sure enough. Have it hung at once, I do entreat of you. I shall not be easy until I hear that both the gates are hung—that in the stockade, and that in the house itself."

"It was my intention to commence today," returned the father, "but your departure has prevented it. I will wait a day or two, to let your mother and sisters tranquilize their minds a little before we besiege them with the noise and clamor of the workmen."

"Better besiege them with that, my dear sir, than leave them exposed to an Indian, or even a rebel attack."

The major then went on to give some of his more modern military notions touching the art of defense. As one of the old school, he believed his father a miracle of skill; but what young man who had enjoyed the advantages of ten or fifteen years of the most recent training in any branch of knowledge ever believed the educations of those who went before him beyond the attacks of criticism? The captain listened patiently, and with an old man's tolerance for inexperience, glad to have any diversion to unhappy thoughts.

All this time Maud watched their movements from the loop, with eyes streaming with tears. She saw Robert pause and look back, again and again; and once more she thrust out the handkerchief. It was plain, however, he did not see it; for he turned and proceeded, without any answering signal.

"He never can know whether it was Beulah or I," thought Maud; "yet he may fancy we are both here."

On the rocks that overhung the mills the gentlemen paused, and conversed for quite a quarter of an hour. The distance prevented Maud from discerning their countenances; but she could perceive the thoughtful and, as she fancied, melancholy attitude of the major, as, leaning on his fowling-piece, his face was turned toward the Knoll, and his eyes were really riveted on the loop. At the end of the time mentioned, the young soldier shook hands hastily and covertly with his companions, hurried toward the path, and descended out of sight, following the course of the stream. Maud saw him no more, though her father and Mr. Woods stood on the rocks quite half an hour longer, catching occasional glimpses of his form as it came out of the shadows of the forest into the open space of the little river; and, indeed, until the major was within a short distance of the spot where he was to meet the Indian. Then they heard the reports of both barrels of his fowling-piece fired in quick succession, the signals that he had joined his guide. This welcome news received, the two gentlemen returned slowly toward the house.

Such was the commencement of a day which, while it brought forth nothing alarming to the family of the Hutted Knoll, was still pregnant with important consequences. Major Willoughby disappeared from the sight of his father about ten in the morning, and before twelve the settlement was alive with the rumors of a fresh arrival. Joel knew not whether to rejoice or to despair, as he saw a party of eight or ten armed men rising above the rock, and holding their course across the flats toward the house. He entertained no doubt of its being a party sent by the provincial authorities to arrest the captain, and he foresaw the probability of another's being put into the lucrative station of receiver of the estate, during the struggle which was in perspective. It is surprising how many, and sometimes how pure patriots are produced by just such hopes as those of Joel. At this day there is scarce an instance of a confiscated estate during the American Revolution, connected with which racy traditions are not to be found, that tell of treachery very similar to this contemplated by the overseer; in some instances of treachery effected by means of kinsmen and false friends.

Joel had actually got on his Sunday coat, and was making his way toward the Knoll, in order to be present, at least, at the anticipated scene, when, to his amazement, and somewhat to his disappointment, he saw the captain and chaplain moving down the lawn, in a manner to show that these unexpected arrivals brought not unwelcome guests. This caused him to pause; and when he perceived that the only two among the strangers who had the air of gentlemen were met with cordial shakes of the hand, he turned back toward his own tenement, a half-dissatisfied and yet half-contented man.

The visit which the captain had come out to receive, instead of producing any uneasiness in the family, was, in truth, highly agreeable and very opportune. It was Evert Beekman, with an old friend, attended by a party of chainbearers, hunters, etc., on his way from the "Patent" he owned in the neighborhood —that is to say, within fifty miles—and halting at the Hutted Knoll, under the courteous pretense of paying his respects to the family, but in reality, to bring the suit he now had been making to Beulah for quite a twelvemonth, to a successful termination.

The attachment between Evert Beekman and Beulah Willoughby was of a character so simple, so sincere, and so natural, as scarce to furnish materials for a brief episode. The young man had not

made his addresses without leave obtained from the parents; he had been acceptable to the daughter from the commencement of their acquaintance; and she had only asked him to reflect, ere she gave her answer, when he proposed a day or two before the family left New York.

To own the truth, Beulah was a little surprised that her suitor had delayed his appearance till near the close of May, when she had expected to see him at the beginning of the month. A letter, however, was out of the question, since there was no mode of transmitting it, unless the messenger was sent expressly; and the young man had now come in person to make his own apologies.

Beulah received Evert Beekman naturally, and without the least exaggeration of manner, though a quiet happiness beamed in her handsome face that said as much as lover could reasonably desire. Her parents welcomed him cordially, and the suitor must have been dull indeed not to anticipate all he hoped. Nor was it long before every doubt was removed. The truthful, conscientious Beulah, had well consulted her heart; and while she blushed at her own temerity, she owned her attachment to her admirer. The very day of his arrival they became formally betrothed. As our tale, however, has but a secondary connection with this little episode, we shall not dwell on it more than is necessary to the principal object. It was a busy morning, altogether; and though there were many tears, there were also many smiles. By the time it was usual, at that bland season, for the family to assemble on the lawn, everything, even to the day, was settled between Beulah and her lover, and there was a little leisure to think of other things. It was while the younger Pliny and one of the Smashes were preparing the tea, that the following conversation was held, being introduced by Mr. Woods, in the way of digressing from feelings in which he was not quite as much interested as some of the rest of the party.

"Do you bring us anything new from Boston?" demanded the chaplain. "I have been dying to ask the question these two hours—ever since dinner, in fact; but, somehow, Mr. Beekman, I have not been able to edge in an inquiry."

This was said good-naturedly, but quite innocently; eliciting smiles, blushes, and meaning glances in return. Evert Beekman, however, looked very grave before he made his reply.

"To own the truth, Mr. Woods," he said, "things are getting to be very serious. Boston is surrounded by thousands of our people; and we hope not only to keep the King's forces in the Peninsula, but, in the end, to drive them out of the colony."

"This is a bold measure, Mr. Beekman! a very bold step to take against Cæsar!"

"Woods preached about the rights of Cæsar no later than yesterday, you ought to know, Beekman," put in the laughing captain; "and I am afraid he will be publicly praying for the success of the British arms before long."

"I did pray for the Royal Family," said the chaplain, with spirit, "and I hope I shall ever continue to do so."

"My dear fellow, I do not object to that. Pray for all conditions of men, enemies and friends alike; and particularly, pray for our princes; but pray also to turn the hearts of their advisers."

Beekman seemed uneasy. He belonged to a decidedly whig family, and was himself, at the very moment, spoken of as the colonel of one of the regiments about to be raised in the colony of New York. He held that rank in the militia, as it was; and no one doubted his disposition to resist the British forces at the proper moment. He had even stolen away from what he conceived to be very imperative duties, to secure the woman of his heart before he went into the field. His answer, in accordance, partook essentially of the bias of his mind.

"I do not know, sir, that it is quite wise to pray so very willingly for the Royal Family," he said. "We may wish them worldly happiness, and spiritual consolation, as part of the human race; but political and specific prayers, in times like

these, are to be used with caution. Men attach more than the common religious notion, just now, to prayers for the King, which some interpret into direct petitions against the United Colonies."

"Well," rejoined the captain, "I cannot agree to this myself. If there were a prayer to confound parliament and its counsels, I should be very apt to join in it cordially; but I am not yet ready to throw aside king, queen, princes and princesses, all in a lump, on account of a few taxes, and little tea."

"I am sorry to hear this from you, sir," answered Evert. "When your opinions were canvassed lately at Albany, I gave a sort of pledge that you were certainly more with us than against us."

"Well then, I think, Beekman, you drew me in my true outlines. In the main, I think the colonies right, though I am still willing to pray for the King."

"I am one of those, Captain Willoughby, who look forward to the most serious times. The feeling throughout the colonies is tremendous, and the disposition on the part of the royal officers is to meet the crisis with force."

"You have a brother a captain of foot in one of the regiments of the crown, Colonel Beekman—what are his vie ws in this serious state of affairs?"

"He has already thrown up his commission—refusing even to sell out, a privilege that was afforded him. His name is now before Congress for a majority in one of the new regiments that are to be raised."

The captain looked grave; Mrs. Willoughby anxious; Beulah interested; and Maud thoughtful.

"This has a serious aspect, truly," observed the first. "When men abandon all their early hopes, to assume new duties, there must be a deep and engrossing cause. I had not thought it like to come to this!"

"We have had hopes Major Willoughby might do the same; I know that a regiment is at his disposal, if he be inclined to join us. No one would be more gladly received. We are to have Gates, Montgomery, Lee, and many other old officers from regular corps, on our side."

"Will Colonel Lee be put at the head of the American forces?"

"I think not, sir. He has a high reputation, and a good deal of experience, but he is a humorist; and what is something, though you will pardon it, he is not an American born."

"It is quite right to consult such considerations, Beekman; were I in Congress, they would influence me, Englishman as I am, and in many things must always remain."

"I am glad to hear you say that, Willoughby," exclaimed the chaplain—"right down rejoiced to hear you say so! A man is bound to stand by his birthplace, through thick and thin."

"How do you, then, reconcile your opinions in this matter to your birthplace, Woods?" asked the laughing captain.

To own the truth, the chaplain was a little confused. He had entered into the controversy with so much zeal, of late, as to have imbibed the feelings of a thorough partisan; and, as is usual with such philosophers, was beginning to overlook everything that made against his opinions, and to exaggerate everything that sustained them.

"How?"—he cried, with zeal, if not with consistency—"Why, well enough. I am an Englishman, too, in the general view of the case, though born in Massachusetts. Of English descent, and an English subject."

"Umph? Then Beekman here, who is of Dutch descent, is not bound by the same principles as we are ourselves?"

"Not by the same feelings, possibly; but surely, by the same principles. Colonel Beekman is an Englishman by construction, and you are by birth. Yes, I'm what may be called a constructive Englishman."

Even Mrs. Willoughby and Beulah laughed at this, though not a smile had crossed Maud's face since her eye had lost Robert Willoughby from view. The captain's ideas seemed to take a new direction, and he was silent some little time before he spoke.

"Under the circumstances in which we are now placed, as respects each other, Mr. Beekman," he said, "it is proper that there should be no concealments on grave points. Had you arrived an hour or two earlier, you would have met a face well known to you, in that of my son, Major Willoughby."

"Major Willoughby, my dear sir!" exclaimed Beekman, with a start of unpleasant surprise; "I had supposed him with the royal army in Boston. You say he has left the Knoll—I sincerely hope not for Albany."

"No—I wished him to go in that direction at first, and to see you, in particular; but his representations of the state of the country induced me to change my mind; he travels by a private way, avoiding all the towns of note or size."

"In that he has done well, sir. Near to me as a brother of Beulah's must always seem, I should be sorry to see Bob just at the moment. If there be no hope of getting him to join us, the further we are separated the better."

This was said gravely, and it caused all who heard it fully to appreciate the serious character of a quarrel that threatened to arm brother against brother. As if by common consent, the discourse changed, all appearing anxious, at a moment otherwise so happy, to obliterate impressions so unpleasant from their thoughts.

The captain, his wife, Beulah, and the colonel, had several long and private communications in the course of the evening. Maud was not sorry to be left to herself, and the chaplain devoted his time to the entertainment of the friend of Beekman, who was in truth a surveyor, brought along partly to preserve appearances, and partly for service. The chain-bearers, hunters, etc., had been distributed in the different cabins of the settlement, immediately on the arrival of the party.

That night, when the sisters retired, Maud perceived that Beulah had something to communicate out of the common way. Still, she did not know whether it would be proper for her to make any inquiries, and things were permitted to take their natural course. At length Beulah, in her gentle way, remarked—

"It is a fearful thing, Maud, for a woman to take upon herself the new duties, obligations and ties of a wife."

"She should not do it, Beulah, unless she feels a love for the man of her choice that will sustain her in them. You, who have real parents living, ought to feel this fully, as I doubt not you do."

"Real parents! Maud, you frighten me! Are not my parents yours? Is not all our love common?"

"I am ashamed of myself, Beulah. Dearer and better parents than mine no girl ever had. I am ashamed of my words, and beg you will forget them."

"That I shall be very ready to do. It was a great consolation to think that should I be compelled to quit home, as compelled I must be in the end, I should leave with my father and mother a child as dutiful, and one that loves them as sincerely as yourself, Maud."

"You have thought right, Beulah. I do love them to my heart's core! Then you are right in another sense; for I shall never marry. My mind is made up to that."

"Well, dear, many are happy that never marry—many women are happier than those that do. Evert has a kind, manly, affectionate heart, and I know will do all he can to prevent my regretting home; but we can never have more than one mother, Maud!"

Maud did not answer, though she looked surprised that Beulah should say this to her.

"Evert has reasoned and talked so much to my father and mother," continued the *fiancée*, blushing, "that they have thought we had better be married at once. Do you know, Maud, that it has been settled this evening that the ceremony is to take place to-morrow?"

"This is sudden, indeed, Beulah! Why have they determined on so unexpected a thing?"

"It is all owing to the state of the country. I know not how he has done it; but Evert has persuaded my father that the sooner I am his wife, the more

secure we shall all be, here at the Knoll."

"I hope you love Evert Beekman, dearest, dearest Beulah?"

"What a question, Maud! Do you suppose I could stand up before a minister of God and plight my faith to a man I did not love? Why have you seemed to doubt it?"

"I do not doubt it. I am very foolish, for I know you are conscientious as the saints in heaven; and yet, Beulah, I think I could scarce be so tranquil about one I loved."

The gentle Beulah smiled, but she no longer felt uneasiness. She understood the impulses and sentiments of her own pure but tranquil nature too well to distrust herself; and she could easily imagine that Maud would not be as composed under similar circumstances.

"Perhaps it is well, sister mine," she answered, laughing, though blushing, "that you are so resolved to remain single; for one hardly knows where to find a suitor sufficiently devoted and ethereal for your taste. No one pleased you last winter, though the least encouragement would have brought a dozen to your feet; and here there is no one you can possibly have, unless it be dear, good, old Mr. Woods."

Maud compressed her lips and really looked stern, so determined was she to command herself; then she answered somewhat in her sister's vein—

"It is very true," she said, "there is no hero for me to accept, unless it be dear Mr. Woods; and he, poor man, has had one wife that cured him of any desire to possess another, they say."

"Mr. Woods! I never knew that he was married. Who can have told you this, Maud?"

"I got it from Robert," answered the other, hesitating a little. "He was talking one day of such things."

"What things, dear?"

"Why—of getting married—I believe it was about marrying relatives—or connections—or some such thing; for Mr. Woods married a cousin-german, it would seem—and so he told me all about it. Bob was old enough to know his wife when she died. Poor man, she led him a hard life—he must be far from the Knoll by this time, Beulah!"

"Mr. Woods! I left him with papa a few minutes since, talking over the ceremony for to-morrow!"

"I meant Bob—"

Here the sisters caught each other's eyes, and both blushed, consciousness presenting to them, at the same instant, the images that were uppermost in their respective minds. But no more was said. They continued their employments in silence, and soon each was kneeling in prayer.

The following day Evert Beekman and Beulah Willoughby were married. The ceremony took place, immediately after breakfast, in the little chapel; no one being present but the relatives, and Michael O'Hearn, who quieted his conscience for not worshiping with the rest of the people by acting as their sexton. The honest County Leitrim-man was let into the secret—as a great secret, however—at early dawn, and he had the place swept and in order in good season, appearing in his Sunday attire to do honor to the occasion, as he thought became him.

A mother as tender as Mrs. Willoughby could not resign the first claim on her child without indulging her tears. Maud wept too, but it was as much in sympathy for Beulah's happiness as from any other cause. The marriage, in other respects, was simple, and without any ostentatious manifestations of feeling. It was, in truth, one of those rational and wise connections which promise to wear well, there being a perfect fitness, in station, wealth, connections, years, manners, and habits, between the parties. Violence was done to nothing in bringing this discreet and well principled couple together. Evert was as worthy of Beulah as she was worthy of him. There was confidence in the future on every side; and not a doubt or misgiving of any sort mingled with the regrets, if regrets they could be called, that were in some measure inseparable from the solemn ceremony.

The marriage was completed, the

affectionate father had held the weeping but smiling bride on his bosom, the tender mother had folded her to her heart, Maud had pressed her in her arms in a fervent embrace, and the chaplain had claimed his kiss, when the well meaning sexton approached.

"Is it the likes of yees I wish well to!" said Mike. "Ye may well say that; and to yer husband, and childer, and all that will go before, and all that have come afther ye! I know'd ye when ye was mighty little, and that was years agone; and niver have I seen a cross look on yer pretthy face. I've app'inted to myself, many's the time, a consait to tell ye all this by wor-r-d of mouth; but the likes of yees, and of the Missus, and of Miss Maud there—och! isn't she a swate one! and many's the pity there's no sich tall, handsome jontleman to take her in the bargain, bad luck to him for staying away; and so God bless ye all, praist in the bargain, though he's no praist at all; and there's my good wishes said and done."

CHAPTER X.

"Ho! Princes of Jacob! the strength and the stay
Of the daughters of Zion;—now up and away;
Lo, the hunters have struck her, and bleeding alone
Like the pard in the desert she maketh her moan;
Up with the war-horse, and banner, with spear and with sword,
On the spoiler go down in the might of the Lord."
—LUNT.

THE succeeding fortnight or three weeks brought no material changes beyond those connected with the progress of the season. Vegetation was out in its richest luxuriance, the rows of corn and potatoes, freshly hoed, were ornamenting the flats, the wheat and other grains were throwing up their heads, and the meadows were beginning to exchange their flowers for the seed. As for the forest, it had now veiled its mysteries beneath broad curtains of a green so bright and lively, that one can only meet it beneath a generous sun, tempered by genial rains and a mountain air. The chainbearers and other companions of Beekman quitted the valley the day after the wedding, leaving no one of their party behind but its principal.

The absence of the major was not noted by Joel and his set, in the excitement of receiving so many guests and in the movement of the wedding. But as soon as the fact was ascertained, the overseer and miller made the pretense of a "slack time" in their work, and obtained permission to go to the Mohawk on private concerns of their own. Such journeys were sufficiently common to obviate suspicion; and the leave had, the two conspirators started off in company the morning of the second day, or forty-eight hours after the major and Nick had disappeared. As the latter was known to have come in by the Fort Stanwix route, it was naturally enough supposed that he had returned by the same, and Joel determined to head him on the Mohawk at some point near Schenectady, where he might make a merit of his own patriotism, by betraying the son of his master. The reader is not to suppose Joel intended to do all this openly; so far from it; his plan was to keep himself in the background, while he attracted attention to the supposed toryism of the captain, and illustrated his own attachment to the colonies.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this plan failed in consequence of the new path taken by Nick. At the very moment when Joel and the miller were lounging about a Dutch inn, some fifteen or twenty miles above Schenectady, in waiting for the travelers to descend the valley of the Mohawk Robert Willoughby and his guide were actually crossing the Hudson in momentary security at least. After remaining at his post until satisfied his intended prey had escaped him, Joel with his friend returned to the settlement. Still the opportunity had been improved, to make himself better acquainted with the real state of the country; to open communications with certain patriots of a moral caliber about equal to his own, but of a greater influence; to throw out divers injurious hints and secret insinuations concerning the captain; and to speculate on

the propriety of leaving so important a person to work his will, at a time so critical. But the pear was not yet ripe, and all that could now be done was to clear the way a little for something important in future.

In the meantime, Evert Beekman, having secured his gentle and true-hearted wife, began, though with a heavy heart, to bethink him of his great political duties. It was well understood that he was to have a regiment of the new levies, and Beulah had schooled her affectionate heart to a degree that permitted her to part with him, in such a cause, with seeming resignation. It was, sooth to say, a curious spectacle, to see how these two sisters bent all their thoughts and wishes, in matters of a public nature, to favor the engrossing sentiments of their sex and natures: Maud being strongly disposed to sustain the royal cause, and the bride to support that in which her husband had enlisted, heart and hand.

As for Captain Willoughby, he said little on the subject of politics; but the marriage of Beulah had a powerful influence in confirming his mind in the direction it had taken after the memorable argument with the chaplain. Colonel Beekman was a man of strong good sense, though without the least brilliancy; and his arguments were all so clear and practical as to carry with them far more weight than was usual in the violent partisan discussions of the period. Beulah fancied him a Solon in sagacity, and a Bacon in wisdom. Her father, without proceeding quite as far as this, was well pleased with his cool, discriminating judgment, and much disposed to defer to his opinions. The chaplain was left out of the discussions as incorrigible.

The middle of June was passed at the time Colonel Beekman began to think of tearing himself from his wife, in order to return into the active scenes of preparation he had quitted to make this visit. As usual the family frequented the lawn at the close of the day, the circumstance of most of the windows of the Hut looking on the court, rendering this resort to the open air [illegible]eeable than might otherwise have been the case. Evert was undecided whether to go the following morning or to remain a day longer, when the lawn was thus occupied on the evening of the 25th of the month, Mrs. Willoughby making the tea as usual, her daughters sitting near her, sewing, and the gentlemen at hand, discussing the virtues of different sorts of seed corn.

"There is a stranger!" suddenly exclaimed the chaplain, looking toward the rocks near the mill, the point at which all arrivals in the valley were first seen from the Hut. "He comes, too, like a man in haste, whatever may be his errand."

"God be praised," returned the captain, rising; "it is Nick, on his usual trot, and this is about the time he should be back, the bearer of good news. A week earlier might have augured better, but this will do. The fellow moves over the ground as if he really had something to communicate!"

Mrs. Willoughby and her daughters suspended their avocations, and the gentlemen stood in silent expectation, watching the long, loping strides of the Tuscarora, as he came rapidly across the plain. In a few minutes the Indian came upon the lawn, perfectly in wind, moving with deliberation and gravity, as he drew nearer to the party. Captain Willoughby, knowing his man, waited quite another minute after the red man was leaning against an apple tree, before he questioned him.

"Welcome back, Nick," he then said. "Where did you leave my son?"

"He tell dere," answered the Indian, presenting a note, which the captain read.

"This is all right, Nick; and it shows you have been a true man. Your wages shall be paid to-night. But this letter has been written on the eastern bank of the Hudson, and is quite three weeks old—why have we not seen you sooner?"

"Can't see, when he don't come."

"That is plain enough; but why have you not come back sooner? That is my question"

"Want to look at country—went to shore of Great Salt Lake."

"Oh! Curiosity, then, has been at the bottom of your absence?"

"Nick warrior—no squaw—got no cur'osity."

"No, no—I beg your pardon, Nick; I did not mean to accuse you of so womanish a feeling. Far from it; I know you are a man. Tell us, however, how far, and whither you went?"

"Bos'on," answered Nick, sententiously.

"Boston! That has been a journey, indeed. Surely my son did not allow you to travel in his company through Massachusetts?

"Nick go alone. Two path; one for major; one for Tuscarora. Nick got dere first."

"That I can believe, if you were in earnest. Were you questioned by the way?"

"Yes. Tell 'em I'm Stockbridge—pale-face know no better. T'ink he fox; more like woodchuck."

"Thank you, Nick, for the compliment. Had my son reached Boston before you came away?"

"Here he be"—answered the Indian, producing another missive from the folds of his calico shirt.

The captain received the note, which he read with extreme gravity and some surprise.

"This is in Bob's handwriting," he said, "and is dated 'Boston, June 18th, 1775;' but it is without signature, and is not only Bob, but Bob Short."

"Read, dear Willoughby," exclaimed the anxious mother. "News from him concerns us all."

"News, Wilhelmina! They may call this news in Boston, but one is very little the better for it at the Hutted Knoll. However, such as it is, there is no reason for keeping it a secret, while there is one reason, at least, why it should be known. This is all. 'My dearest sir—thank God I am unharmed; but we have had much to make us reflect; you know what duty requires—my best and endless love to my mother and Beulah—and dear, laughings capricious, pretty Maud. Nick was present, and can tell you all. I do not think he will "extenuate, or aught set down in malice."' And this without direction or signature; with nothing, in fact, but place and date. What say you to all this, Nick?"

"He very good—major dere; he know. Nick dere—hot time—a t'ousand scalp—coat red as blood."

"There has been another battle!" exclaimed the captain; "that is too plain to admit of dispute. Speak out at once, Nick—which gained the day; the British or the Americans?

"Hard to tell—one fight, t'other fight. Red-coat take the ground; Yankee kill. If Yankee could take scalp of all he kill, he whip. But poor warriors at takin' scalp. No know how."

"Upon my word, Woods, there does seem to be something in all this! It can hardly be possible that the Americans would dare to attack Boston, defended as it is by a strong army of British regulars."

"That they would not," cried the chaplain, with emphasis. "This has been only another skirmish.

"What you call skirmge?" asked Nick, pointedly. "It skirmge to take t'ousand scalp, ha?"

"Tell us what has happened, Tuscarora?" said the captain, motioning his friend to be silent.

"Soon tell—soon done. Yankee on hill; reg'lar in canoe. Hundred, t'ousand, fifty canoe—full of red-coat. Great chief, dere!—ten—six—two—all go togeder. Come ashore—parade pale-face manner—march—booh—booh—dem cannon; pop, pop—dem gun. Wah! how he run!"

"Run!—who ran, Nick? Though I suppose it must have been the poor Americans, of course."

"Red-coat run," answered the Indian, quietly.

This reply produced a general sensation, even the ladies starting, and gazing at each other.

"Red-coat run," repeated the captain, slowly. "Go on with your history, Nick; where was this battle fought?"

"T'other Bos'on—over river—go in canoe to fight, like Injin from Canada."

"That must have been in Charlestown, Woods—you may remember Boston is on one peninsula and Charlestown on another.

Still I do not recollect that the Americans were in the latter, Beekman; you told me nothing of that?"

"They were not so near the royal forces, certainly, when I left Albany, sir," returned the Colonel. "A few direct questions to the Indian, however, would bring out the whole truth."

"We must proceed more methodically. How many Yankees were in this fight, Nick? Calculate as we used to in the French war."

"Reach from here to mill—t'ree, two deep, cap'in. All farmer—no sodger. Carry gun, but no carry baggonet; no carry knapsack; no wear red-coat. Look like town-meetin'; fight like devils."

"A line as long as from this to the mill, three deep, would contain about two thousand men, Beekman. Is that what you wish to say, Nick?"

"That about him—pretty near—just so."

"Well, then, there were about two thousand Yankees on this hill—how many King's troops crossed in the canoes to go against them?"

"Two time—one time, so many; t'other time half so many. Nick close by; count him."

"That would make three thousand in all! By George, this does look like work. Did they all go together, Nick?"

"No; one time go first; fight, run away. Den two time go, fight good deal—run away too. Den try harder—set fire to wigwam—go up hill; Yankee run away."

"This is plain enough, and quite graphical. Wigwam on fire? Charlestown is not burnt, Nick?"

"Dat he—look like old Council Fire gone out. Big canoe fire—booh—booh; Nick nebber see such war before—wah! Dead man plenty as leaves on tree; blood run like creek!"

"Were you in this battle, Nick? How came you to learn so much about it?"

"Don't want to be in it—better out—no scalp taken. Red-man not'in' to do dere. How know about him? See him; dat all. Got eye; why no see him behind stone wall? Good see behind stone wall."

"Were you across the water yourself, or did you remain in Boston, and see from a distance?"

"Across in canoe; tell red-coat General send letter by Nick; major say he my friend—let Nick go."

"My son was in this bloody battle then!" said Mrs. Willoughby. "He writes, Hugh, that he is safe?"

"He does, dearest Wilhelmina; and Bob knows us too well to attempt deception in such a matter."

"Did you see the major in the field, Nick—after you crossed the water, I mean?"

"See him all. Six—two—seven t'ousand. Close by. Why not see major stand up like pine—no dodge he head dere. Kill all round him—no hurt him! Fool to stay dere—tell him so; but he no come away. Save he scalp too."

"And how many slain do you suppose there might have been left on the ground—or did you not remain to see?"

"Did see; stay to get gun, knapsack, oder good t'ing—plenty about; pick him up fast as want him." Here Nick coolly opened a small bundle, and exhibited an epaulette, several rings, a watch, five or six pairs of silver buckles, and divers other articles of plunder, of which he had managed to strip the dead. "All good t'ing—plenty as stone—have him without asking."

"So I see, Master Nick; and is this the plunder of Englishmen or of Americans?"

"Red-coat nearest—got most t'ing too. Go farder, fare worse, as pale-face say."

"Quite satisfactory. Were there more red-coats left on the ground, or more Americans?"

"Red-coat, so," said Nick, holding up four fingers—"Yankee, so," holding up one. "Take big grave to hold red-coat; small grave won't hold Yankee. Here what he count; most red-coat. More than t'ousand warrior! British groan like squaw dat lose her hunter."

Such was Saucy Nick's description of the celebrated, and in some particulars unrivaled combat of Bunker Hill, of which he had actually been an eye-witness

on the ground, though using the precaution to keep his body well covered. He did not think it necessary to state the fact that he had given the *coup-de-grace* himself to the owner of the epaulette, nor did he deem it essential to furnish all the particulars of his mode of obtaining so many buckles. In other respects his account was fair enough, "nothing extenuating or setting down aught in malice." The auditors had listened with intense feeling; and Maud, when the allusion was made to Robert Willoughby, buried her pallid face in her hands, and wept. As for Beulah, time and again she glanced anxiously at her husband, and bethought her of the danger to which he might so soon be exposed.

The receipt of this important intelligence confirmed Beekman in the intention to depart. The very next morning he tore himself away from Beulah, and proceeded to Albany. The appointment of Washington and a long list of other officers soon succeeded, including his own as a colonel, and the war may be said to have commenced systematically. Its distant din occasionally reached the Hutted Knoll; but the summer passed away, bringing with it no event to affect the tranquillity of that settlement. Even Joel's schemes were thwarted for a time, and he was fain to continue to wear the mask, and to gather that harvest for another which he had hoped to reap for his own benefit.

Beulah had all a young wife's fears for her husband; but as month succeeded month, and one affair followed another, without bringing him harm, she began to submit to the anxieties inseparable from her situation, with less of self-torment and more of reason. Her mother and Maud were invaluable friends to her, in this novel and trying situation, though each had her own ingrossing cares on account of Robert Willoughby. As no other great battle, however, occurred in the course of the year '75, Beekman remained in safety with the troops that invested Boston, and the major with the army within it. Neither was much exposed, and glad enough were these gentle, affectionate hearts when they learned that the sea separated the combatants.

This did not occur, however, until another winter was passed. In November the family left the Hut, as had been its practice of late years, and went out into the more inhabited districts to pass the winter. This time it came only to Albany, where Colonel Beekman joined it, passing a few happy weeks with his well-beloved Beulah. The ancient town mentioned was not gay at a moment like that; but it had many young officers in it on the American side of the question, who were willing enough to make themselves acceptable to Maud. The captain was not sorry to see several of these youths manifesting assiduity about her he had so long been accustomed to consider as his youngest daughter; for by this time his opinions had taken so strong a bias in favor of the rights of the colonies, that Beekman himself scarcely rejoiced more whenever he heard of any little success alighting on the American arms.

"It will all come right in the end," the worthy captain used to assure his friend, the chaplain. "They will open their eyes at home, ere long, and the injustice of taxing the colonies will be admitted. Then all will come round again; the King will be as much beloved as ever, and England and America will be all the better friends for having a mutual respect. I know my countrymen well; they mean right, and will do right as soon as their stomachs are a little lowered, and they come to look at the truth coolly. I'll answer for it, the Battle of Bunker's Hill made us"—the captain had spoken in this way, now, for some months—"made us a thousand advocates where we had one before. This is the nature of John Bull; give him reason to respect you, and he will soon do you justice, but give him reason to feel otherwise, and he becomes a careless, if not a hard master."

Such were the opinions Captain Willoughby entertained of his native land; a land he had not seen in thirty years, and one in which he had so recently inherited unexpected honors, without awakening a desire to return and enjoy them. His

opinions were right in part, certainly; for they depended on a law of nature, while it is not improbable they were wrong in all that was connected with the notions of any peculiarly manly quality in any particular part of Christendom. No maxim is truer than that which teaches us, "like causes produce like effects"; and as human beings are governed by very similar laws all over the face of this round world of ours, nothing is more certain than the similarity of their propensities.

Maud had no smiles beyond those extracted by her naturally sweet disposition, and a very prevalent desire to oblige, for any of the young soldiers or young civilians who crowded about her chair, during the Albany winter mentioned. Two or three of Colonel Beekman's military friends in particular, would very gladly have became connected with an officer so much respected, through means so exceedingly agreeable; but no encouragement emboldened either to go beyond the attention and assiduities of a marked politeness.

"I know not how it is," observed Mrs. Willoughby, one day, *tete-a-tete* with her husband; "Maud seems to take less pleasure than is usual with girls of her years in the attentions of your sex. That her heart is affectionate—warm—even tender, I am very certain; and yet no sign of preference, partiality, or weakness, in favor of any of these fine young men, of whom we see so many, can I discover in the child; they all seem alike to her!"

"Her time will come, as it happened to her mother before her," answered the captain. "Whooping-cough and measles are not more certain to befall children than love to befall a young woman. You were all made for it, my dear Willy, and no fear but the girl will catch the disease one of these days; and that, too, without any inoculation."

"I am sure I have no wish to separate from my child"—so Mrs. Willoughby always spoke of, and so she always felt toward Maud—"I am sure I have no wish to separate from my child; but as we cannot always remain, it is perhaps better this one should marry, like the other. There is young Verplanck, much devoted to her; he is every way a suitable match, and then he is in Evert's own regiment."

"Ay, he would do; though, to my fancy, Luke Herring is the far better match."

"That is because he is richer and more powerful. Hugh—you men cannot think of a daughter's establishment without immediately dragging in houses and lands as part of the ceremony."

"By George, wife of mine, houses and lands in moderation are very good sweeteners of matrimony!"

"And yet, Hugh, I have been very happy as a wife, nor have you been very miserable as a husband, without any excess of riches to sweeten the state!" answered Mrs. Willoughby, reproachfully. "Had you been a full general I could not have loved you more than I have done as a mere captain."

"All very true, Wilhelmina, dearest," returned the husband, kissing the faithful partner of his bosom with strong affection—"very true, my dear girl; for girl you are, and ever will be in my eyes; but you are one in a million, and I humbly trust there are not ten hundred and one in every thousand, just like myself. For my part, I wish, dear, saucy, capricious little Maud no worse luck in a husband than Luke Herring."

"She will never be his wife; I know her, and my own sex, too well to think it. You are wrong, however, Willoughby, in applying such terms to the child. Maud is not in the least capricious, especially in her affections. See with what truth and faithfulness of sisterly attachment she clings to Bob. I do declare I am often ashamed to feel that even his own mother has less solicitude about him than this dear girl."

"Pooh, Willy; don't be afflicted with the idea that you don't make yourself sufficiently miserable about the boy. Bob will do well enough, and will very likely come out of this affair a lieutenant-colonel. I may live yet to see him a general officer; certainly, if I live to be as old as my grandfather, Sir Thomas. As for Maud, she finds Beulah uneasy about Beekman;

and having no husband herself, or any lover that she cares a straw about, why she just falls upon Bob as a *pis-aller*. I'll warrant you she cares no more for him than any of the rest of us—than myself, for instance; though, as an old soldier, I don't scream every time I fancy a gun fired over yonder at Boston."

"I wish it were well over. It is so unnatural for Evert and Robert to be on opposite sides."

"Yes, it is out of the common way, I admit; and yet 'twill all come round, in the long run. This Mr. Washington is a clever fellow, and seems to play his cards with spirit and judgment. He was with us in that awkward affair of Braddock's; and between you and me, Wilhelmina, he covered the regulars, or we should all have laid our bones on that accursed field. I wrote you at the time what I thought of him, and now you see it is all coming to pass.'

It was one of the captain's foibles to believe himself a political prophet; and as he had really both written and spoken highly of Washington, at the time mentioned, it had no small influence on his opinions to find himself acting on the same side with this admired favorite. Prophecies often produce their own fulfillment in cases of much greater gravity than this; and it is not surprising that our captain found himself strengthened in his notions by the circumstance.

The winter passed away without any of Maud's suitors making a visible impression on her heart. In March, the English evacuated Boston, Robert Willoughby sailing with his regiment for Halifax, and thence with the expedition against Charleston, under Sir Henry Clinton. The next month the family returned to the Knoll, where it was thought wiser, and even safer, to be at a moment so critical, than even in a more frequented place. The war proceeded, and to the captain's great regret, without any very visible approaches toward the reconciliation he had so confidently anticipated. This rather checked his warmth in favor of the colonial cause; for an Englishman by birth, he was much opposed at bottom to anything like a dissolution of the tie that connected America with the mother country; a political event that now began seriously to be talked of among the initiated.

Desirous of thinking as little as possible of disagreeable things, the worthy owner of the valley busied himself with his crops, his mills, and his improvements. He had intended to commence leasing his wild lands about this time, and to begin a more extended settlement, with an eye to futurity; but the state of the country forbade the execution of the project, and he was fain to limit his efforts by their former boundaries. The geographical position of the valley put it beyond any of the ordinary exactions of military service; and as there was a little doubt thrown around its owner's opinions, partly in consequence of his son's present and his own previous connection with the royal army, and partly on account of Joel's secret machinations, the authorities were well content to let the settlement alone, provided it would take care of itself.

Notwithstanding the prominent patriotism of Joel Strides and the miller, they were well satisfied themselves with this state of things, preferring peace and quietness to the more stirring scenes of war. Their schemes, moreover, had met with somewhat of a check, in the feeling of the population of the valley, which, on an occasion calculated to put their attachment to its owner to the proof, had rather shown that they remembered his justice, liberality and upright conduct, more than exactly comported with their longings. This manifestation of respect was shown at an election for a representative in a local convention, at which every individual at the Hutted Knoll, who had a voice at all, the two conspirators excepted, had given it in favor of the captain. So decided was this expression of feeling, indeed, that it compelled Joel and the miller to chime in with the cry of the hour, and to vote contrary to their own wishes.

One, dwelling at the Hutted Knoll in the summer of 1776, could never have imagined that he was a resident of a country convulsed by a revolution, and disfigured by war. There everything seemed peace-

ful and calm—the woods sighing with the airs of their sublime solitude; the genial sun shedding its heats on a grateful and generous soil; vegetation ripening and yielding with all the abundance of a bountiful nature, as in the more tranquil days of peace and hope.

"There is something frightful in the calm of this valley, Beulah!" exclaimed Maud, one Sunday, as she and her sister looked out of the library window, amid the breathing stillness of the forest, listening to the melancholy sound of the bell that summoned them to prayers. "There is a frightful calm over this place, at an hour when we know that strife and bloodshed are so active in the country. Oh! that the hateful Congress had never thought of making this war!"

"Evert writes me all is well, Maud; that the times will lead to good; the people are right, and America will now be a nation, in time, he thinks; a great, and a very great nation."

"Ah! it is this ambition of greatness that hurries them all on! Why can they not be satisfied with being respectable subjects of so great a country as England, that they must destroy each other for this phantom of liberty? Will it make them wiser, or happier, or better than they are?"

Thus reasoned Maud, under the influence of one engrossing sentiment. As our tale proceeds we shall have occasion to show, perhaps, how far was that submisson to events which she inculcated from the impulses of her true character. Beulah answered mildly, but it was more as a young American wife:

"I know Evert thinks it all right, Maud; and you will own he is neither fiery nor impetuous. If his cool judgment approve of what has been done, he may well suppose that it has not been done in too much haste, or needlessly."

"Think, Beulah," rejoined Maud, with an ashen cheek, and in trembling tones, "that Evert and Robert may, at this very moment, be engaged in strife against each other. The last messenger who came in brought us the miserable tidings that Sir William Howe was landing a large army near New York, and that the Americans were preparing to meet it. We are certain that Bob is with his regiment; and his regiment we know is in the army. How can we think of this liberty at a moment so critical?"

Beulah did not reply; for in spite of her quiet nature and implicit confidence in her husband she could not escape a woman's solicitude. The colonel had promised to write at every good occasion, and that which he promised was usually performed. She thought and thought rightly, that a very few days would bring them intelligence of importance; though it came in a shape she had little anticipated, and by a messenger she had then no desire to see.

In the meantime the season and its labors advanced. August was over, and September with its fruits had succeeded, promising to bring the year round without any new or extraordinary incidents to change the fortunes of the inmates of the Hutted Knoll. Beulah had now been married more than a twelve-month, and was already a mother; and of course all that time had elapsed since the son quitted his father's house. Nick, too, had disappeared shortly after his return from Boston; and throughout this eventful summer, his dark, red countenance had not been seen in the valley.

CHAPTER XI.

'And now 'tis still! no sound to wake
The primal forest's awful shade;
And breathless lies the covert brake,
Where many an ambushed form is laid:
I see the red man's gleaming eye,
Yet all so hushed, the gloom profound,
That summer birds flit heedlessly,
And mocking nature smiles around."

—LUNT.

THE eventful summer of 1776 had been genial and generous in the valley of the Hutted Knoll. With a desire to drive away obtrusive thoughts, the captain had been much in his fields, and he was bethinking himself of making a large contribution to the good cause in the way of fatted porkers, of which he had an unusual number, that he thought might yet

be driven through the forest to Fort Stanwix before the season closed. In the way of intelligence from the seat of war, nothing had reached the family but a letter from the major, which he had managed to get sent, and in which he wrote with necessary caution. He merely mentioned the arrival of Sir William Howe's forces, and the state of his own health. There was a short postscript in the following words, the letter having been directed to his father:—"Tell dearest Maud," he said, "that charming women have ceased to charm me; glory occupying so much of my day-dreams, like an *ignis fatuus*, I fear; and that as for love, all my affections are centered in the dear objects at the Hutted Knoll. If I had met with a single woman I admired half as much as I do her pretty self, I should have been married long since."

This was written in answer to some thoughtless rattle that the captain had volunteered to put in his last letter, as coming from Maud, who had sensitively shrunk from sending a message when asked; and it was read by father, mother, and Beulah, as the badinage of a brother to a sister, without awakening a second thought in either. Not so with Maud herself, however. When her seniors had done with this letter, she carried it to her own room, reading and re-reading it a dozen times; nor could she muster resolution to return it; but, finding at length that the epistle was forgotten, she succeeded in retaining it without awakening attention to what she had done. This letter now became her constant companion, and a hundred times did the sweet girl trace its characters, in the privacy of her chamber, or in that of her now solitary walks in the woods.

As yet, the war had produced none of those scenes of ruthless frontier violence that had distinguished all the previous conflicts of America. The enemy was on the coast, and thither the efforts of the combatants had been principally directed. It is true, an attempt on Canada had been made, but it failed for want of means; neither party being in a condition to effect much, as yet, in that quarter. The captain had commented on this peculiarity of the present struggle; all those which had preceded it having, as a matter of course, taken the direction of the frontiers between the hostile provinces.

"There is no use, Woods, in bothering ourselves about these things, after all," observed Captain Willoughby, one day, when the subject of hanging the long neglected gates came up between them. "It's a heavy job, aud the crops will suffer if we take off the hands this week. We are as safe here as we should be in Hyde Park; and safer to; for there housebreakers and footpads abound; whereas, your preaching has left nothing but very vulgar and everyday sinners at the Knoll."

The chaplain had little to say against this reasoning; for, to own the truth, he saw no particular cause for apprehension. Impunity had produced the feeling of security, until these gates had got to be rather a subject of amusement than of any serious discussion. The preceding year, when the stockade was erected, Joel had managed to throw so many obstacles in the way of hanging the gates that the duty was not performed throughout the whole of the present summer, the subject having been mentioned but once or twice, and then only to be postponed to a more fitting occasion.

As yet no one in the valley knew of the great event which had taken place in July. A rumor of a design to declare the provinces independent had reached the Hut in May; but the major's letter was silent on this important event, and positive information had arrived by no other channel; otherwise the captain would have regarded the struggle as much more serious than he had ever done before; and he might have set about raising these all-important gates in earnest. As it was, however, there they stood, each pair leaning against its proper wall or stockade, though those of the latter were so light as to have required but eight or ten men to set them on their hinges, in a couple of hours at most.

Captain Willoughby still confined his agricultural schemes to the site of the old Beaver Pond. The area of that was

perfectly beautiful, every unsightly object having been removed, while the fences and the tillage were faultlessly neat and regular. Care had been taken, too, to render the few small fields around the cabins which skirted this lovely rural scene worthy of their vicinage. The stumps had all been dug, the surfaces leveled, and the orchards and gardens were in keeping with the charms that nature had so bountifully scattered about the place.

While, however, all in the shape of tillage was confined to this one spot, the cattle ranged the forest for miles. Not only was the valley, but the adjacent mountain-sides were covered with intersecting paths beaten by the herds in the course of years. These paths led to many a glen, or look-out, where Beulah and Maud had long been in the habit of pursuing their rambles during the sultry heats of summer. Though so beautiful to the eye, the flats were not agreeable for walks, and it was but natural for the lovers of the picturesque to seek the eminences, where they could overlook the vast surfaces of leaves that were spread before them; or to bury themselves in ravines and glens, within which the rays of the sun scarce penetrated. The paths mentioned led near or to a hundred of these places, all within a mile or two of the Hut. As a matter of course, then, they were not neglected.

Beulah had now been a mother several months. Her little Evert was born at the Knoll, and he occupied most of those gentle and affectionate thoughts which were not ingrossed by his absent father. Her marriage, of itself, had made some changes in her intercourse with Maud; but the birth of the child had brought about still more. The care of this little being formed Beulah's great delight; and Mrs. Willoughby had all that peculiar interest in her descendant which marks a grandmother's irresponsible love. These two passed half their time in the nursery, a room fitted between their respective chambers; leaving Maud more alone than it was her wont to be, and of course to brood over her thoughts and feelings. These periods of solitude our heroine was much accustomed to pass in the forest. Use had so far emboldened her, that apprehension never shortened her walks or lessened her pleasure. Of danger from any ordinary source there was literally next to none, man having never been known to approach the valley unless by the regular path; while the beasts of prey had been so actively hunted, as rarely to be seen in that quarter of the country. The panther excepted, no wild quadruped was to be in the least feared in summer; and of the first, none had ever been met with by Nick, or any of the numerous woodsmen who had now frequented the adjacent hills for two lustrums.

About three hours before the setting of the sun, on the evening of the 23d of September, 1776, Maud Willoughby was pursuing her way quite alone along one of the paths beaten by the cattle, at some little distance from a rocky eminence where there was a lookout, on which Mike, by her father's orders, had made a rude seat. It was on the side of the clearing most remote from all the cabins; though, once on the elevation, she could command a view of the whole of the little panorama around the site of the ancient pond. In that day ladies wore the well-known gypsy hat, a style that was peculiarly suited to the face of our heroine. Exercise had given her cheeks a rich glow; and though a shade of sadness, or at least of reflection, was now habitually thrown athwart her sweet countenance, this bloom added an unusual luster to her eyes, and a brilliancy to her beauty, that the proudest *belle* of any drawing-room might have been glad to possess. Although living so retired, her dress always became her rank; being simple, but of the character that denotes refinement, and the habits and taste of a gentlewoman. In this particular, Maud had ever been observant of what was due to herself; and, more than all, had she attended to her personal appearance since a chance expression of Robert Willoughby's had betrayed how much he prized the quality in her.

Looking thus, and in a melancholy frame of mind, Maud reached the rock, and took

her place on its simple seat, throwing aside her hat to catch a little of the cooling air on her burning cheeks. She turned to look at the lovely view again, with a pleasure that never tired. The rays of the sun were streaming athwart the verdant meadows and rich corn, lengthening the shadows, and mellowing everything, as if expressly to please the eye of one like her who now gazed upon the scene. Most of the people of the settlement were in the open air, the men closing their day's work in the fields, and the women and children busied beneath shades, with their wheels and needles; the whole presenting such a picture of peaceful, rural life, as a poet might like to describe, or an artist to delineate with his pencil.

"The landscape smiles
Calm in the sun, and silent are the hills
And valleys, and the blue serene of air."
—*The Vanished Lark.*

"It is very beautiful!" thought Maud. "Why cannot men be content with such scenes of loveliness and nature as this, and love each other, and be at peace, as God's laws command! Then we might all be living happily together here, without trembling lest news of some sad misfortune should reach us from hour to hour. Beulah and Evert would not be separated; but both could remain with their child—and my dear, dear father and mother would be so happy to have us all around them, in security—and then, Bob, too—perhaps Bob might bring a wife from the town with him, that I could love as I do Beulah." It was one of Maud's day dreams to love the wife of Bob, and make him happy by contributing to the happiness of those he most prized. "No: I could never love her as I do Beulah; but I should make her very dear to me, as I ought to, since she would be Bob's wife."

The expression of Maud's face toward the close of this mental soliloquy, was of a singular sadness; and yet it was the very picture of sincerity and truth. It was some such look as the windows of the mind assume, when the feelings struggle against nature and hope, for resignation and submission to duty.

At this instant a cry arose from the valley! It was one of those spontaneous, involuntary outbreakings of alarm that no art can imitate, no pen describe; but which conveys to the listener's ear terror in the very sound. At the next instant, the men from the mill were seen rushing up to the summit of the cliff that impended over their dwellings, followed by their wives, dragging their children after them, making frantic gestures, indicative of alarm. The first impulse of Maud was to fly; but a moment's reflection told her it was much too late for that. To remain and witness what followed would be the safer and more wise. Her dress was dark, and she would not be likely to be observed at the distance at which she was placed; having behind her too a background of gloomy rock. Then the scene was too exciting to admit of much hesitation or delay in coming to a decision; a fearful species of maddened curiosity mingling with her alarm. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that Maud continued gazing on what she saw, with eyes that seemed to devour the objects before them.

The first cry from the valley was followed by the appearance of the fugitives from the mill. These took the way toward the Hut, calling on the nearest laborers by name, to seek safety in flight. The words could not be distinguished at the rock, though indistinct sounds might; but the gestures could not be mistaken. In half a minute the plain was alive with fugitives; some rushing to their cabins for their children, and all taking the direction of the stockade, as soon as the last were found. In five minutes the roads and lanes near the Knoll were crowded with men, women, and children, hastening forward to its protection, while a few of the former had already rushed through the gateways, as Maud correctly fancied, in quest of their arms.

Captain Willoughby was riding among his laborers when this fearful interruption to a tranquillity so placid first broke upon his ear. Accustomed to alarms, he galloped forward to meet the fugitives from the mill, issuing orders as he passed to

several of the men nearest the house. With the miller, who thought little of anything but safety at that instant, he conversed a moment, and then pushed boldly on toward the verge of the cliffs. Maud trembled as she saw her father in a situation which she thought must be so exposed; but his cool manner of riding about proved that he saw no enemy very near. At length he waved his hat to some object or person in the glen beneath, and she even thought she heard his shout. At the next moment he turned his horse, and was seen scouring along the road toward the Hut. The lawn was covered with the fugitives as the captain reached it, while a few armed men were already coming out of the courtyard. Gesticulating, as if giving orders, the captain dashed through them all without drawing the rein, and disappeared in the court. A minute later he re-issued, bearing his arms, followed by his wife and Beulah, the latter pressing little Evert to her bosom.

Something like order now began to appear among the men. Counting all ages and both colors, the valley, at this particular moment, could muster thirty-three males capable of bearing arms. To these might be added some ten or fifteen women who had occasionally brought down a deer, and who might be thought more or less dangerous stationed at a loop with a rifle or a musket. Captain Willoughby had taken some pains to drill the former, who could go through some of the simpler light-infantry evolutions. Among them he appointed sundry corporals, while Joel Strides had been named a sergeant. Joyce, now an aged and war-worn veteran, did the duty of adjutant. Twenty men were soon drawn up in array, in front of the open gateway on the lawn, under the immediate orders of Joyce; and the last woman and child that had been seen approaching the place of refuge had passed within the stockade. At this instant Captain Willoughby called a party of the stragglers around him, and set about hanging the gates of the outer passage, or that which led through the palisades.

Maud would now have left the rock, but at that moment a dark body of Indians poured up over the cliffs, crowning it with a menacing cloud of at least fifty armed warriors. The rivulet lay between her and the Hut, and the nearest bridge that crossed it would have brought her within reach of danger. Then it would require at least half an hour to reach that bridge by the circuitous path she would be compelled to take, and there was little hope of getting over it before the strangers should have advanced. It was better to remain where she could behold what was passing, and to be governed by events, than to rush blindly into unseen risks.

The party that crowned the cliffs near the mills showed no impatience to advance. It was evidently busy in reconnoitering, and in receiving accessions to its numbers. The latter soon increased to some seventy or eighty warriors. After waiting several minutes in inaction, a musket, or rifle was fired toward the Hut, as if to try the effect of a summons and the range of a bullet. At this hint the men on the lawn retired within the stockade, stacked their arms, and joined the party that was endeavoring to get the gates in their places. From the circumstance that her father directed all the women and children to retire within the court, Maud supposed that the bullet might have fallen somewhere near them. It was quite evident, however, that no one was injured.

The gates intended for the stockade, being open like the rest of that work, were materially lighter than those constructed for the house itself. The difficulty was in handling them with the accuracy required to enter the hinges, of which there were three pairs. This difficulty existed on account of their great height. Of physical force, enough could be applied to toss them over the stockade itself, if necessary; but finesse was needed, rather than force, to effect the principal object, and that under difficult circumstances. It was scarcely possible that the proximity of so fierce an enemy as a body of savages in their war-paint, for such the men at the

mill had discovered was the guise of their assailants, would in any measure favor the coolness and tact of the laborers. Poor Maud lost the sense of her own danger, in the nervous desire to see the long-forgotten gates hung; and she rose once or twice, in feverish excitement, as she saw that the leaf which was raised fell in or out, missing its fastenings. Still the men persevered, one or two sentinels being placed to watch the Indians, and give timely notice of their approach, should they advance.

Maud now kneeled, with her face bowed to the seat, and uttered a short but most fervent prayer, in behalf of the dear beings that the Hut contained. This calmed her spirits a little, and she rose once more to watch the course of events. The body of men had left the gate at which they had just been toiling, and were crowding around its fellow. One leaf was hung!

As an assurance of this, she soon after saw her father swing it backward and forward on its hinges, to cause it to settle into its place. This was an immense relief, though she had heard too many tales of Indian warfare to think there was any imminent danger of an attack by open day in the very face of the garrison. The cool manner in which her father proceeded satisfied her that he felt the same security for the moment; his great object being, in truth, to make suitable provision against the hours of darkness.

Although Maud had been educated as a lady, and possessed the delicacy and refinement of her class, she had unavoidably caught some of the fire and resolution of a frontier life. To her, the forest, for instance, possessed no fancied dangers; but when there was real ground for alarm she estimated its causes intelligently and with calmness. So it was also in the present crisis. She remembered all she had been taught or had heard, and quick of apprehension, her information was justly applied to the estimate of present circumstances.

The men at the Hut soon had the second leaf of the gate ready to be raised. At this instant an Indian advanced across the flat, alone, bearing a branch of a tree in his hand, and moving swiftly. This was a flag of truce, desiring to communicate with the pale-faces. Captain Willoughby met the messenger alone, at the foot of the lawn, and there a conference took place that lasted several minutes. Maud could only conjecture its objects, though she thought her father's attitude commanding and his gesture stern. The red man, as usual, was quiet and dignified. This much our heroine saw, or fancied she saw; but beyond this, of course, all was vague conjecture. Just as the two were about to part, and had even made courteous signs of their intention, a shout arose from the workmen, which ascended, though faintly, as high as the rock. Captain Willoughby turned, and then Maud saw his arm extended toward the stockade. The second leaf of the gate was in its place, swinging to and fro, in a sort of exulting demonstration of its uses. The savage moved away more slowly than he had advanced, occasionally stopping to reconnoiter the Knoll and its defenses.

Captain Willoughby now returned to his people, and he was some time busied in examining the gates, and giving directions about their fastenings. Utterly forgetful of her own situation, Maud shed tears of joy as she saw that this great object was successfully effected. The stockade was an immense security to the people of the Hut. Although it certainly might be scaled, such an enterprise would require great caution, courage and address; and it could hardly be effected at all by daylight. At night, even, it would allow the sentinels time to give the alarm, and with a vigilant lookout, might be the means of repelling an enemy. There was also another consideration connected with the stockade. An enemy would not be fond of trusting himself inside of it, unless reasonably certain of carrying the citadel altogether; inasmuch as it might serve as a prison to place him in the hands of the garrison. To re-cross it under a fire from the loops, would be an exploit so hazardous that few Indians would think of undertaking it. All this Maud knew from her father's conversations, and she saw how much had been obtained in

raising the gates. Then the stockade, once properly closed, afforded great security to those moving about within it; the timbers would be apt to stop a bullet, and were a perfect defense against a rush; leaving time to the women and children to get into the court, even allowing that the assailants succeeded in scaling the palisades.

Maud thought rapidly and well, in the strait in which she was placed. She understood most of the movements on both sides, and she also saw the importance of her remaining where she could note all that passed, if she intended to make an attempt at reaching the Hut after dark. This necessity determined her to continue at the rock so long as light remained. She wondered she was not missed, but rightly attributed the circumstance to the suddenness of the alarm, and the crowd of other thoughts which would naturally press upon the minds of her friends at such a fearful moment. "I will stay where I am," thought Maud, a little proudly, "and prove, if I am not really the daughter of Hugh Willoughby, that I am not altogether unworthy of his love and care! I can even pass the night in the forest, at this warm season, without suffering."

Just as these thoughts crossed her mind in a sort of mental soliloquy, a stone rolled from a path above her, and fell over the rock on which the seat was placed. A footstep was then heard, and the girl's heart beat quick with apprehension. Still she conceived it safest to remain perfectly quiet. She scarce breathed in her anxiety to be motionless. Then it occurred to her that some one besides herself might be out from the Hut, and that a friend was near. Mike had been in the woods that very afternoon, she knew; for she had seen him; and the true-hearted fellow would indeed be a treasure to her at that awful moment. This idea, which rose almost to certainty as soon as it occurred, induced her to spring forward, when the appearance of a man whom she did not recognize, dressed in a hunting-shirt, and otherwise attired for the woods, carrying a short rifle in the hollow of his arm, caused her to stop in motionless terror. At first her presence was not observed; but no sooner did the stranger catch a glimpse of her person than he stopped, raised his hands in surprise, laid his rifle against a tree, and sprang forward; the girl closing her eyes, and sinking on the seat, with bowed head, expecting the blow of the deadly tomahawk.

"Maud—dearest, dearest Maud, do you not know me?" exclaimed one, leaning over the pallid girl, while he passed an arm round her slender waist, with an affection so delicate and reserved, that at another time it might have attracted attention. "Look up, dear girl, and show that at least you fear not me!"

"Bob," said the half senseless Maud, "whence come you? Why do you come at this fearful instant? Would to God your visit had been better timed!"

"Terror makes you say this, my poor Maud! Of all the family, I had hoped for the warmest welcome from you. We think alike about this war; then you are not so much terrified at the idea of my being found here, but can hear reason. Why do you say this, then, my dearest Maud?"

By this time Maud had so far recovered as to be able to look up into the major's face, with an expression in which alarm was blended with unutterable tenderness. Still she did not throw her arms around him, as a sister would clasp a beloved brother; but rather, as he pressed her gently to his bosom, repelled the embrace by a slight resistance. Extricating herself, however, she turned and pointed toward the valley.

"Why do I say this? See for yourself—the savages have at length come, and the whole dreadful picture is before you."

Young Willoughby's military eye took in the scene at a glance. The Indians were still at the cliff, and the people of the settlement were straining at the heavier gates of the Hut, having already got one of them into position where it wanted only the proper application of a steady force to be hung. He saw his father actively employed in giving directions, and a few pertinent questions drew all the other circumstances from Maud. The enemy

had now been in the valley more than an hour, and the movements of the two parties were soon related.

"Are you alone, dearest Maud? Are you shut out by this sudden inroad?" demanded the major, with concern and surprise.

"So it would seem. I can see no other—though I did think Michael might be somewhere near me in the woods here; I at first mistook your footsteps for his."

"That is a mistake," returned Willoughby, leveling a small pocket spy-glass at the Hut; "Mike is tugging at that gate, upholding a part of it, like a corner stone. I see most of the faces I know there, and my dear father is as active and yet as cool as if at the head of a regiment."

"Then I am alone; it is perhaps better that as many as possible should be in the house to defend it."

"Not alone, my sweet Maud, so long as I am with you. Do you still think my visit so ill-timed?"

"Perhaps not, after all. Heaven knows what I should have done by myself when it became dark!"

"But are we safe on this seat? May we not be seen by the Indians, since we so plainly see them?"

"I think not. I have often remarked that when Evert and Beulah have been here, their figures could not be perceived from the lawn, owing, I fancy, to the dark background of rock. My dress is not light, and you are in green, which is the color of the leaves, and not easily to be distinguished. No other spot gives so good a view of what takes place in the valley. We must risk a little exposure, or act in the dark."

"You are a soldier's daughter, Maud." This was as true of Major Meredith as of Captain Willoughby, and might therefore be freely said by even Bob. "You are a soldier's daughter, and nature has clearly intended you to be a soldier's wife. This is a *coup-d'œil* not to be despised."

"I shall never be a wife at all," murmured Maud, scarce knowing what she said; "I may not live to be a soldier's daughter even much longer. But why are you here?—surely, surely, you can have no connection with those savages!—I have heard of such horrors; but you would not accompany them, even though it were to protect the Hut.'

"I'll not answer for that, Maud. One would do a great deal to preserve his paternal dwelling from pillage, and his father's gray hairs from violence. But I came alone; that party and its objects being utterly strangers to me."

"And why do you come at all, Bob?" inquired the girl, looking up into his face with open affection. "The situation of the country is now such as to make your visits very hazardous."

"Who could know the regular major in this hunting shirt and forest garb? I have not an article about my person to betray me, even were I before a court. No fear for me, then, Maud; unless it be from these demons in human shape, the savages. Even they do not seem to be very fiercely inclined, as they appear at this moment more disposed to eat than to attack the Hut. Look for yourself; those fellows are certainly preparing to take their food; the group that is just now coming over the cliffs is dragging a deer after it."

Maud took the glass, though with an unsteady hand, and she looked a moment at the savages. The manner in which the instrument brought these wild beings nearer to her eye caused her to shudder, and she was soon satisfied.

"The deer was killed this morning by the miller," she said; "they have doubtless found it in or near his cabin. We will be thankful, however, for this breathing time—it may enable my dear father to get up the other gate. Look, Robert, and see what progress they make!"

"One side is just hung, and much joy does it produce among them! Persevere, my noble old father, and you will soon be safe against your enemies. What a calm and steady air he has, amid it all! Ah! Maud, Hugh Willoughby ought at this moment to be at the head of a brigade, helping to suppress this accursed and unnatural rebellion. Nay, more; he may

be there, if he will only listen to reason and duty."

"And this is then your errand here, Bob?" asked his fair companion, gazing earnestly at the major.

"It is, Maud—and I hope you, whose feelings I know to be right, can encourage me to hope."

"I fear not. It is now too late. Beulah's marriage with Evert has strengthened his opinions—and then—"

"What, dearest Maud? You pause as if that 'then' had a meaning you hesitated to express."

Maud colored; after which she smiled faintly, and proceeded:

"We should speak reverently of a father—and such a father, too. But does it not seem probable to you, Bob, that the many discussions he has had with Mr. Woods may have a tendency to confirm each in his notions?"

Robert Willoughby would have answered in the affirmative, had not a sudden movement at the Hut prevented.

CHAPTER XII.

"From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore wood, their evening post,
And heedful watched them as they crossed
The Till by Twisal Bridge."—SCOTT.

IT was just at this instant that most of the women of the settlement rushed from the court, and spread themselves within the stockade, Mrs. Willoughby and Beulah being foremost in the movement. The captain left the gate, too, and even the men, who were just about to raise the last leaf, suspended their toil. It was quite apparent some new cause for uneasiness or alarm had suddenly awoke among them. Still the stack of arms remained untouched, nor was there any new demonstration among the Indians. The major watched everything with intense attention through the glass.

"What is it, dear Bob?" demanded the anxious Maud. "I see my dearest mother—she seems alarmed."

"Was it known to her that you were about to quit the house, when you came out on this walk?"

"I rather think not. She and Beulah were in the nursery with little Evert, and my father was in the fields. I came out without speaking to any person, nor did I meet any before entering the forest."

"Then you are now first missed. Yes, that is it—and no wonder, Maud, it creates alarm. Merciful God? How must they all feel in a moment like this?"

"Fire your rifle, Bob—that will draw their eyes in this direction, and I will wave my handkerchief—perhaps that might be seen. Beulah has received such signals from me before."

"It would never do. No, we must remain concealed, watching their movements in order to be able to aid them at the proper time. It is painful to endure this suspense, beyond a doubt; but the pain must be borne in order to insure the safety of one who is so very, very precious to us all."

Notwithstanding the fearful situation in which she was placed, Maud felt soothed by these words. The language of affection, as coming from Robert Willoughby, was very dear to her at all times, and never more than at a moment when it appeared that even her life was suspended, as it might be, by a hair.

"It is as you say," she answered gently, giving him her hand with much of her ancient frankness of manner; "we should be betrayed, and of course lost—but what means the movement at the Hut?"

There was indeed a movement within the stockade. Maud's absence was now already clearly ascertained, and it is needless to describe the commotion the circumstance produced. No one thought any longer of the half of the gate that still remained to be hung, but every supposable part of the house and inclosures had been examined in quest of her who was missing. Our heroine's last remark, however, was produced by certain indications of an intention to make a descent from one of the external windows of the common parlor, a room, it will be remembered, that stood on the little cliff, above the rivulet that wound beneath its base. This

cliff was about forty feet high, and though it offered a formidable obstacle to any attempt to scale it, there was no great difficulty in an active man's descending, aided by a rope. The spot, too, was completely concealed from the view of the party which still remained on the rock, near the mill, at a distance of quite half a mile from the gates of the stockade. This fact greatly facilitated the little sortie, since, once in the bed of the rivulet, which was fringed with bushes, it would be very practicable, by following its windings, to gain the forest unseen. The major leveled his glass at the windows, and immediately saw the truth of all that has here been mentioned.

"They are preparing to send a party out," he said, "and doubtless in quest of you, Maud. The thing is very feasible, provided the savages remain much longer in their present position. It is a matter of surprise to me that the last have not sent a force in the rear of the Hut, where the windows are at least exposed to fire, and the forest is so close as to afford a cover to the assailants. In front there is literally none, but a few low fences, which is the reason, I presume, that they keep so much aloof."

"It is not probable that they know the valley. With the exception of Nick, but few Indians have ever visited us, and that rarely. Those we have seen have all been of the most peaceable and friendly tribes; not a true warrior, as my father says, ever having been found among them. Nick is the only one of them all that can thus be termed."

"Is it possible that fellow has led this party? I have never more than half confided in him; and yet he is too old a friend of the family, I should think, to be guilty of such an act of baseness."

"My father thinks him a knave, but I question if he has an opinion of him as bad as that. Besides, he knows the valley, and would have led the Indians around to the rear of the house, if it be a place so much more favorable for the attack, as you suppose. These wretches have come by the common paths, all of which first strike the river, as you know, below the mills."

"That is true. I lost my way, a few miles from this, the path being very blind on the eastern route, which I traveled as having gone it last with Nick, and thinking it the safest. Fortunately I recognized the crest of this moutain above us by its shape, or I might have never found my way; although the streams, when struck, are certain guides to the woodsman. As soon as I hit the cowpaths, I knew they would lead me to the barns and sheds. See! a man is actually descending from a window!"

"Oh! Bob, I hope it is not my father! He is too old—it is risking too much to let him quit the house."

"I will tell you better when he reaches the ground. Unless—aye—it is the Irishman, O'Hearn."

"Honest Mike! He is always foremost in everything, though he so little knows how anything but digging ought to be done. Is there not another following him—or am I deceived?"

"There is—he has just reached the ground too. This might be spared, did they know how well you are guarded, Maud, by one who would die cheerfully to prevent harm from reaching you!"

"They little dream of that, Bob," answered Maud, in a low tone. "Not a human being in that valley fancies you nearer to him than the royal armies are at this moment. But they do not send a third—I am glad they weaken their own force no further."

"It is certainly best they should not. The men had their rifles slung when they descended, and they are now getting them ready for service. It is Joel Strides who is with Mike."

"I am sorry for it. That is a man I little like, Bob, and I should be sorry if he knew of your being here."

This was said quickly, and with a degree of feeling that surprised the major, who questioned Maud earnestly as to her meaning and its reasons. The latter told him that she scarce knew herself; that she disliked the man's manner, had long thought his principles bad, and that Mike, in his extraordinary way, had said certain things to her to awaken distrust.

"Mike speaks in hieroglyphics," said the major, laughing, in spite of the serious situation in which he and his companion were placed, "and one must never be too sure of his meaning. Joel has now been many years with my father, and he seems to enjoy his confidence."

"He makes himself useful, and is very guarded in what he says at the Hut. Still—I wish him not to know of your being here."

"It will not be easy to prevent it, Maud. I should have come boldly into the valley, but for this accidental meeting with you, trusting that my father has no one about him so base as to betray his son."

"Trust not Joel Strides. I'll answer for Mike with my life; but sorry indeed should I be that Joel Strides knew of your being among us. It were better, perhaps, that most of the workmen should not be in the secret. See—the two men are quitting the foot of the rocks."

This was true, and Robert Willoughby watched their movements with the glass. As had been expected, they first descended into the bed of the rivulet, wading along its shore, under the cover of the bushes, until they soon became concealed even from the view of one placed on a height as elevated as that occupied by Robert and Maud. It was sufficiently apparent, however, that their intention was to reach the forest in this manner, when they would probably commence their search for the missing young lady. Nor was it long before Robert and Maud plainly saw the two adventurers quit the bed of the stream and bury themselves in the forest. The question now seriously arose as to the best course for the major and his companion to pursue. Under ordinary circumstances, it would have been wisest, perhaps, to descend at once and meet the messengers, who might soon be found at some of the usual haunts of the girl; but against this the latter so earnestly protested, and that in a manner so soothing to the young man's feelings, that he scarce knew how to oppose her wishes. She implored him not to confide in Joel Strides too hastily, at least. It might be time enough, when there was no alternative; until the true character of the party then in the valley was known, it would be premature. Nothing was easier than to conceal himself until it was dark, when he might approach the Hut, and be admitted without his presence being known to any but those on whom the family could certainly rely. The major urged the impossibility of his quitting Maud, until she was joined by the two men sent in quest of her, and then it would be too late, as he must be seen. Although he might escape immediate recognition in his present dress, the presence of a stranger would excite suspicions, and compel an explanation.

To this Maud replied in the following manner: Her customary places of resort, when in the woods, were well-known; more especially to Michael, who was frequently employed in their vicinity. These were a little waterfall, that was situated a hundred rods up the rivulet, to which a path had been made expressly, and where an arbor, seat, and little table had been arranged, for the purposes of working, reading, or taking refreshments. To this spot the men would unquestionalby proceed first. Then, there was a deep ravine, some distance further, that was often visited for its savage beauty, and whither she more frequently went, perhaps, than to any other place. Thither Michael would be certain to lead his companion. These two places visited, they might infallibly expect to see the men at the rock, where the two were then seated, as the last spot in which Maud might naturally be expected to be found. It would require an hour to visit the two places first named and to examine the surrounding woods; and by that time not only would the sun be set, but the twilight would be disappear ing. Until that moment, then, the major might remain at her side, and on the sound of approaching footsteps of the messengers, he had only to retire behind a projection of the rocks, and afterward follow toward the Knoll at a safe distance.

This plan was too plausible to be rejected; and giving Robert an hour of uninterrupted discourse with his companion,

it struck him as having more advantages than any other mentioned. The party near the mills, too, remaining perfectly quiet, there was less occasion for any change of their own, than might otherwise have been the case. So far, indeed, from appearing to entertain any hostile intention, not a cabin had been injured, if approached, and the smoke of the conflagration which had been expected to rise from the mills and the habitations in the glen did not make its appearance. If any such ruthless acts as applying the brand and assaulting the people were in contemplation, they were at least delayed until night should veil them in a fitting darkness.

It is always a great relief to the mind, in moments of trial, to have decided on a course of future action. So the major and Maud now found; for, taking his seat by her side, he began to converse with his companion more connectedly, and with greater calmness than either had yet been able to achieve. Many questions were asked, and answers given, concerning the state of the family, that of his father and mother, and dear Beulah and her infant, the latter being as yet quite a stranger to the young soldier.

"Is he like his rebel of a father?" asked the royal officer, smiling, but as his companion fancied, painfully; "or has he more of the look of the Willoughbys. Beekman is a good-looking Dutchman; yet I would rather have the boy resemble the good old English stock, after all."

"The sweet little fellow resembles both father and mother; though the first the most, to Beulah's great delight. Papa says he is true 'Holland's come of,' as they call it, though neither mamma nor I will allow of any such thing. Colonel Beekman is a very worthy man, Bob, and a most affectionate and attentive husband. Beulah, but for this war, could not be happier."

"Then I forgive him one-half of his treason—for the remainder let him take his luck. Now I am an uncle, my heart begins to melt a little toward the rebel. And you, Maud, how do the honors of an aunt sit upon your feelings? But women are all heart and would love a rat."

Maud smiled but she answered not. Though Beulah's child was almost as dear to her as one of her own could have been, she remembered that she was not its aunt in fact; and though she knew not why, in that company, and even at that grave moment, the obtrusive thought summoned a bright flush to her cheeks. The major probably did not notice this change of countenance, since, after a short pause, he continued the conversation naturally.

"The child is called Evert, is it not, Aunt Maud," he asked laying an emphasis on "aunt."

Maud wished this word had not been used; and yet Robert Willoughby, could the truth have been known, had adverted to it with an association in his own mind that would have distressed her just then still more. Aunt Maud was the name that others, however, were most fond of adopting, since the birth of the child; and remembering this, our heroine smiled.

"That is what Beulah has called me these six months," she said—"or ever since Evert was born. I became an aunt the day he became a nephew; and dear, good Beulah has not once called me sister since, I think."

"These little creatures introduce new ties into families," answered the major, thoughtfully. "They take the places of the generations before them, and edge us out of our hold on the affections, as in the end they supplant us in our stations in life. If Beulah love me only as an uncle, however, she may look to it. I'll be supplanted by no Dutchman's child that was ever born!"

"You, Bob!" cried Maud, starting. "You are its real uncle; Beulah must ever remember you, and love you, as her own brother!"

Maud's voice became suddenly hushed, like one who feared she had said too much. The major gazed at her intently, but he spoke not; nor did his companion see his look, her own eyes being cast meekly and tremblingly on the earth at her feet. A considerable pause succeeded, and then the conversation reverted to what was going on in the valley.

The sun was now set, and the shadows

of evening began to render objects a little indistinct beneath them. Still it was apparent that much anxiety prevailed in and about the Hut, doubtless on account of our heroine's absence. So great was it, indeed, as entirely to supersede the hanging of the remaining leaf of the gate, which stood in the gap where it belonged, stayed by pieces of timber, but unhung. The major thought some disposition had been made, however, by which the inmates might pass and repass by the half that was suspended, making a tolerable defense, when all was closed.

"Hist!" whispered Maud, whose faculties were quickened by the danger of her companion; "I hear the voice of Michael, and they approach. No sense of danger can repress poor O'Hearn's eloquence; his ideas seeming to flow from his tongue very much as they rise to his thoughts, chance directing which shall appear first."

"It is true, dear girl; and as you seem so strongly to wish it, I will withdraw. Depend on my keeping near you, and on my presence, should it be required."

"You will not forget to come beneath the windows, Bob," said Maud, anxiously, but in great haste, for the footsteps of the men drew rapidly near; "at the very spot where the others descended."

The major bent forward and kissed a cheek that was chilled with apprehension, but which the act caused to burn like fire; then he disappeared behind the projection of rock he had himself pointed out. As for Maud, she sat in seeming composure, awaiting the approach of those who drew near.

"The divil bu-r-rn me, and all the Injins in Ameriky along wid me," said Mike, scrambling up the ascent by a short cut, "but I think we'll find the young Missus here, or I don't think we'll be finding her the night. It's a cursed counthry to live in, Misther Strides, where a young lady of the loveliness and pithiful beauty of Miss Maud can be lost in the woods, as it might be a sheep or a stray baste that was for tasting the neighbor's pastures."

"You speak too loud, Mike, and you speak foolishness into the bargain," returned the wary Joel.

"Is it I you mane! Och! don't think ye're goin' to set me a rowin' a boat once more, ag'in my inclinations and edication, as ye did in ould times. I've rung ye into yer mat'in', and out of yer matin', too, twenty times too often to be catched in that same trap twice. It's Miss Maud I wants, and Miss Maud I'll find, or—Lord bless her swate face and morals, and her cha*rack*ter, and all belonging to her!—isn't that, now, a prathy composure for the likes of her, and the savages at the mill, and the missus in tears, and the masther mighty un'asy, and all of us bothered! See how she sits on that bit of a sate that I puts there for her wid my own hands, as a laddy should, looking jist what she is, the quane of the woods, and the delight of our eyes!"

Maud was too much accustomed to the rhapsodies of the County Leitrim-man to think much of this commencement; but resolute to act her part with discretion, she rose to meet him, speaking with great apparent self-possession.

"Is it possible you are in quest of me?" she said—"why has this happened?—I usually return about this hour."

"Hoors is it! Don't talk of hoors, beauthiful young laddy, when a single quarther might be too late," answered Mike dogmatically. "It's your own mother that's not happy at yer being in the woods the night, and yer ould father that has moore un'asiness than he'll confess; long life to the church in which confession is held to be right, and dacent, and accorthing to the gospel of St. Luke, and the whole calendar in the bargain. Ye'll not be frightened, Miss Maud, but take what I've to tell ye jist as if ye didn't bel'ave a wo-r-r-d of it; but, divil bur-rn me, if there aren't Injins enough on the rocks, forenent the mill, to scalp a whole province, and a county along with it, if ye'll give 'em time and knives enough."

"I understand you, Michael, but am not in the least alarmed," answered Maud, with an air of great steadiness; such, indeed, as would have delighted the captain. "Something of what has been passing below have I seen; but, by being calm and reasonable, we shall escape the

danger. Tell me only that all is safe in the Hut—that my dear mother and sister are well."

"Is it the missus? Och, she's as valiant as a peacock, only strick down and overcome about your own self! As for Miss Beuly, where's the likes of her to be found, unless it's on this same bit of a rock? And it's agreeable to see the captain, looking for all the wor-r-l-d like a commander-in-chaif of six or eight rijiments, ordering one this-a-way, and another that-a-way. By St. Patrick, young laddy, I only hopes them vagabonds will come on as soon as yourself is inside the sticks, jist to give the ould jontleman a better occasion to play souldier on 'em. Should they happen to climb over the sticks, I've got the prettiest bit of a shillaleh ready that mortal eyes iver adorned! 'Twould break a head and niver a hat harmed—a thousand's the pities them chaps wears no hats. Howsever, we'll see."

"Thank you, Mike, for the courage you show, and the interest you take in all our welfares. Is it not too soon to venture down upon the flats, Joel? I must trust to you as a guide."

"I think Miss Maud would do full as well if she did. Mike must be told, too, not to talk so much, and above all, not to speak so loud. He may be heard, sometimes, a dozen rods."

"Tould!" exclaimed the County Leitrim-man, in heat—"And isn't tould I've been twenty times already, by your own smooth conversation? Where's the occasion to tell a thing over and over ag'in, when a man is not wanting in ears? It's the likes of you that loves to convarse."

"Well, Mike, for my sake, you will be silent, I hope," said Maud. "Remember, I am not fitted for a battle, and the first thing is to get safely into the house. The sooner we are down the hill, perhaps, the better it may be. Lead the way, then, Joel, and I will follow. Michael will go next to you, in readiness for any enemy, and I will bring up the rear. It will be better for all to keep a dead silence, until it be necessary to speak."

This arrangement was made, and the party proceeded, Maud remaining a little behind, in order that the major might catch glimpses of her person, in the somber light of the hour and the forest, and not miss the road. A few minutes brought them all upon a level land, where Joel, instead of entering the open fields, inclined more into the woods, always keeping one of the many paths. His object was to cross the rivulet under cover, a suitable place offering a short distance from the point where the stream glided out of the forest. Toward this spot Joel quietly held his way, occasionally stopping to listen if any movement of importance had occurred on the flats. As for Maud, her eyes were frequently cast behind her, for she was fearful Robert Willoughby might miss the path, having so little acquaintance with the thousand sinuosities he encountered. She caught glimpses of his person, however, in the distance, and saw that he was on the right track. Her chief concern, therefore, soon became an anxiety that he should not be seen by her companions. As they kept a little in advance, and the underbrush was somewhat thick, she had strong hopes that this evil would be avoided.

The path being very circuitous, it took some time to reach the spot Joel sought. Here he, Mike, and Maud, crossed the rivulet on a tree that had been felled expressly to answer the purposes of a rustic foot-bridge; a common expedient of the American forest. As our heroine had often performed this exploit when alone, she required no assistance, and she felt as if half the danger of her critical situation had vanished when she found herself on the same side of the stream as the Hut. Joel, nothing suspecting, and keeping all his faculties on the sounds and sights that might occur in front, led the way diligently, and soon reached the verge of the woods. Here he paused for his companions to join him.

Twilight had, by this time, nearly disappeared. Still, enough remained to enable Maud to perceive that many were watching for her, either at the windows above the cliff, or through different parts

of the stockades. The distance was so small, that it might have been possible, by raising the voice, even to converse; but this would be an experiment too hazardous, as some hostile scouts, at that hour, might very well be fearfully near."

"I see nothing, Miss Maud," observed Joel, after taking a good look around him. "By keeping the path that follows the edge of the brook, though it is so crooked, we shall be certain of good walking, and shall be half hid by the bushes. It's best to walk quick, and be silent."

Maud bade him go on, waiting herself behind a tree, to let the two men precede her a short distance. This was done, and the major stole up to her side unseen. A few words of explanation passed, when the young lady ran after her guides, leaving Robert Willoughby seated on a log. It was a breathless moment to Maud, that in which she was passing this bit of open land. But the distance was so short that it was soon got over; and the three found themselves beneath the cliff. Here they passed the spring, and following the path which led from it, turned the edge of the rocks, and ascended to the foot of the stockades. It remained to turn these also, in order to reach the so recently suspended gates. As Maud passed swiftly along, almost brushing the timbers with her dress, she saw, in the dim light, fifty faces looking at her, and thrust between the timbers; but she paused not, spoke not—scarcely breathed. A profound stillness reigned on the Knoll; but when Joel arrived at the gate, it was instantly opened, and he glided in. Not so with Mike, who stopped and waited until she he had been in quest of entered before him, and was in safety.

Maud found herself in her mother's arms the instant the gate was passed. Mrs. Willoughby had been at the angle of the cliff, had followed her child in her swift progress round the stockade, and was ready to receive her the moment she entered. Beulah came next, and then the captain embraced, kissed, wept over, and scolded his little favorite.

"No reproaches now, Hugh," said the more considerate wife and gentlewoman —"Maud has done no more than has long been her custom, and no one could have foreseen what has happened."

"Mother—father"—said Maud, almost gasping for breath—"let us bless God for my safety, and for the safety of all that are dear to us—thank you, dear Mr. Woods —there is a kiss, to thank you—now let us go into the house; I have much to tell you —come, dear sir—come, dearest mother, do not lose a moment; let us all go to the library."

As this was the room in which the family devotions were usually held, the auditors fancied the excited girl wished to return her thanks in that mode, one not unfrequent in that regulated family, and all followed her, who dared, with tender sympathy in her feelings, and profoundly grateful for her safety. As soon as in the room, Maud carefully shut the door, and went from one to another, in order to ascertain who were present. Finding none but her father, mother, sister and the chaplain, she instantly related all that had passed, and pointed out the spot where the major was, at that moment, waiting for the signal to approach. It is unnecessary to dwell on the astonishment and delight, mingled with concern, that this intelligence produced.

Maud then rapidly recounted her plan, and implored her father to see it executed. The captain had none of her apprehensions on the subject of his people's fidelity, but he yielded to the girl's earnest entreaties. Mrs. Willoughby was so agitated with all the unlooked-for events of the day, that she joined her daughter in the request, and Maud was told to proceed with the affair in her own way.

A lamp was brought, and placed by Maud in a pantry that was lighted by a single, long, narrow, external window at the angle of the building next the offices, and the door was closed on it. This lamp was the signal for the major to approach, and with beating hearts the females bent forward from the windows, secure of not being seen in the night, which had now fairly closed on the valley, to listen to his approaching footsteps beneath. They did not wait long ere he was not only heard,

but dimly seen, though totally out of the line of sight from all in the Hut, with the exception of those above his head. Captain Willoughby had prepared a rope, one end of which was dropped, and fastened by the major himself around his body. A jerk let those above know when he was ready.

"What shall we do next?" asked the captain, in a sort of despair. "Woods and I can never drag that tall, heavy fellow up such a distance. He is six feet, and weighs a hundred and eighty, if he weighs a pound."

"Peace," half whispered Maud, from a window. "All will be right in a moment." Then drawing in her body, the pale but earnest girl begged her father to have patience. "I have thought of all. Mike and the blacks may be trusted with our lives—I will call them."

This was done, and the County Leitrimman and the two Plinies were soon in the room.

"O'Hearn," said Maud, inquiringly—"I think you are my friend?"

"Am I my own? Is it yees, is the question? Well, jist wish for a tooth, and ye may take all in my head for the asking. Och, I'd be a baste, else! I'd ate the remainder of my days wid not'ing but a spoon to obleege ye."

"As for you, Pliny, and your son here, you have known us from children. Not a word must pass the lips of either, as to what you see—now pull, but with great care, lest the rope break."

The men did as ordered, raising their load from the ground a foot or two at a time. In this manner the burden approached, yard after yard, until it was evidently drawing near the window.

"It's the captain hoisting up the big baste of a hog, for provisioning the hoose ag'in a saige," whispered Mike to the negroes, who grinned as they tugged; "and when the cra'tur squails, see to it that you do not squail yerselves."

At that moment the head and shoulders of a man appeared at the window. Mike let go the rope, seized a chair, and was about to knock the intruder on the head; but the captain arrested the blow.

"It's one of the vagabond Injins that has undermined the hog, and coome up in it's stead," roared Mike.

"It's my son," answered the captain, mildly; "see that you are silent, and secret."

CHAPTER XIII.

"And glory long has made the sages smile;
'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion, wind—
Depending more upon the historian's style
Than on the name a person leaves behind.
Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to Hoyle,
The present century was growing blind
To the great Marlborough's skill in giving knocks
Until his late life by Archdeacon Coxe."—BYRON.

MAJOR WILLOUGHBY'S feet were scarcely on the library floor when he was clasped in his mother's arms. From these he soon passed into Beulah's; nor did his father hesitate about giving him an embrace nearly as warm. As for Maud, she stood by, weeping in sympathy and in silence.

"And you too, old man," said Robert Willoughby, dashing the tears from his eyes, and turning to the elder black, holding out a hand—"this is not the first time, by many, old Pliny, that you have had me between heaven and earth. Your son was my old playfellow, and we must shake hands also. As for O'Hearn, steel is not truer, and we are friends for life."

The negroes were delighted to see their young master; for in that day, the slaves exulted in the honor, appearance, importance, and dignity of their owners, far more than their liberated descendants do now in their own. The major had been their friend when a boy; and he was at present their pride and glory. In their view of the matter, the English army did not contain his equal in looks, courage, military skill, or experience; and it was treason *per se* to fight against a cause that he upheld. The captain had laughingly related to his wife a conversation to this effect he had not long before overheard between the two Plinies.

"Well, Miss Beuly do a pretty well," observed the elder; "but, den he all 'e better, if he no get 'Merican 'mission. What you call raal colonel, eh? Have 'e paper from 'e King like Masser Bob, and

wear a regimental like a head of a turkey cock, so! Dat bein' an up and down officer."

"P'rhaps Miss Beuly bring a colonel round, and take off a blue coat, and put on a scarlet," answered the younger.

"Nebber!—nebber see dat, Plin, in a rebbleushun. Dis got to be a rebbleushun; and when *dat* begin in 'arnest, gib up all idee of 'mendment. Rebbleushuns look all one way—nebber see two side, any more than colored man see two side in a redskin."

As we have not been able to trace the thought to antiquity, this expression may have been the original of the celebrated axiom of Napoleon, which tells us that revolutions "never go backward." At all events, such was the notion of Pliny Willoughby, Sr., as the namesake of the great Roman styled himself; and it was greatly admired by Pliny Willoughby, Jr., to say nothing of the opinions of Big Smash and Little Smash, both of whom were listeners to the discourse.

"Well, I wish a Colonel Beekman"—to this name the fellow gave the true Doric sound of *Bakeman*—"I wish a colonel only corprul in King's troops, for Miss Beuly's sake. Better be sarjun dere dan briggerdeer-gin'ral in 'Merican company; dat *I* know."

"What a briggerdeer mean, Plin?" inquired Little Smash, with interest. "Who he keep company wid, and what he do? Tell a body, do—so many officer in 'e army, one nebber know all he name."

"'Mericans can't hab 'em. Too poor for *dat*. Briggerdeer great gentleum, and wear a red coat. Old time see 'em in hundreds, come to visit masser and missus, and play wid Masser Bob. Oh! no rebbleushun in dem days; but ebberybody know he own business, and do it too."

This will serve to show the political sentiments of the Plinies, and may also indicate the bias that the Smashes were likely to imbibe in such company. As a matter of course, the major was gladly welcomed by these devoted admirers; and when Maud again whispered to them the necessity of secrecy, each shut his mouth, no trifling operation in itself, as if it were to be henceforth hermetically sealed.

The assistants were now dismissed, and the major was left alone with his family. Again and again Mrs. Willoughby embraced her son; nor had her new ties at all lessened Beulah's interest in her brother. Even the captain kissed his boy anew, while Mr. Woods shook hands once more with his old pupil, and blessed him. Maud alone was passive in this scene of feeling and joy.

"Now, Bob, let us to business," said the captain, as soon as tranquillity was a little restored. "You have not made this difficult and perilous journey without an object; and, as we are somewhat critically situated ourselves, the sooner we know what it is, the less will be the danger of its not producing its proper effect."

"Heaven send, dear sir, that it fail not in its effect, indeed," answered the son. "But is not this movement in the valley pressing, and have I not come opportunely to take a part in the defense of the house?"

"That will be seen a few hours later, perhaps. Everything is quiet now, and will probably so remain until near morning; or Indian tactics have undergone a change. The fellows have lighted campfires on their rocks, and seem disposed to rest for the present, at least. Nor do I know that they are bent on war at all. We have no Indians near us who would be likely to dig up the hatchet; and these fellows profess peace, by a messenger they have sent me."

"Are they not in their war-paint, sir? I remember to have seen warriors, when a boy, and my glass has given these men the appearance of being on what they call 'a war path.'"

"Some of them are certainly in that guise, though he who came to the Knoll was not. *He* pretended that they were a party traveling toward the Hudson in order to learn the true causes of the difficulties between their Great English and their Great American Fathers. He asked for meal and meat to feed his young men with. This was the whole purport of this errand."

"And your answer, sir; is it peace or war between you?"

"Peace in professions, but I much fear war in reality. Still one cannot know. An old frontier garrison-man, like myself, is not apt to put much reliance on Indian faith. We are now, God be praised! all within the stockade; and having plenty of arms and ammunition, are not likely to be easily stormed. A siege is out of the question; we are too well provisioned to dread that."

"But you leave the mills, the growing grain, the barns, even the cabins of your workmen, altogether at the mercy of these wretches."

"That cannot well be avoided, unless we go out and drive them off in open battle. For the last they are too strong, to say nothing of the odds of risking fathers of families against mere vagabonds, as I suspect these savages to be. I have told them to help themselves to meal, or grain, of which they will find plenty in the mill. Pork can be got in the houses, and they have made away with a deer already that I had expected the pleasure of dissecting myself. The cattle roam the woods at this season, and are tolerably safe; but they can burn the barns and other buildings should they see fit. In this respect we are at their mercy. If they ask for rum or cider, that may bring matters to a head; for refusing may exasperate them, and granting either, in any quantity, will certainly cause them all to get intoxicated."

"Why would not that be good policy, Willoughby?" exclaimed the chaplain. "If fairly disguised once, our people might steal out upon them and take away all their arms. Drunken men sleep very profoundly."

"It would be a canonical mode of warfare, perhaps, Woods," returned the captain, smiling, "but not exactly a military. I think it safer that they should continue sober; for, as yet, they manifest no great intentions of hostility. But of this we can speak hereafter. Why are you here, my son, and in this guise?"

"The motive may as well be told now as at another time," answered the major, giving his mother and sister chairs, while the others imitated their example in being seated. "Sir William Howe has permitted me to come out to see you—I might almost say ordered me out; for matters have now reached a pass when we think every loyal gentleman in America must feel disposed to take sides with the crown."

A general movement among his auditors told the major the extent of the interest they felt in what was expected to follow. He paused an instant to survey the dark-looking group that was clustering around him; for no lights were in the room on account of the open windows, and he spoke in a low voice from motives of prudence; then he proceeded:

"I should infer from the little that passed between Maud and myself," he said, "that you are ignorant of the two most important events that have yet occurred in this unhappy conflict?"

"We learn little here," answered the father. "I have heard that my Lord Howe and his brother Sir William have been named commissioners by His Majesty to heal all the differences. I knew them both when young men, and their elder brother before them. Black Dick, as we used to call the admiral, is a discreet, well-meaning man; though I fear both of them owe their appointments more to their affinity to the sovereign than to the qualities that might best fit them to deal with the Americans."

"Little is known of the affinity of which you speak,"* and less said in the army," returned the major, "but I fear there is no hope of the object of the com-

* The mother of the three Lords Howe, so well known in American history, viz: George, killed before Ticonderoga in the war of '56; Richard, the celebrated Admiral, and the hero of the 1st of June; and Sir William, for several years Commander-in-chief in this country, and the fifth and last Viscount; was a Mademoiselle Kilmansegge, who was supposed to be a natural daughter of George I. This would make these three officers and George II. first cousins; and George III. their great-nephew *a la mode de Bretagne.* Walpole, and various other English writers, speak openly, not only of the connection, but of the family resemblance. Indeed, most of the gossiping writers of that age seem to allow that Lord Howe was a grandson of the first English sovereign of the House of Brunswick.

mission's being effected. The American Congress has declared the colonies altogether independent of England; and so far as this country is concerned, the war is carried on as between nation and nation. All allegiance, even in name, is openly cast aside."

"You astonish me, Bob! I did not think it could ever come to this!"

"I thought your native attachments would hardly endure as strong a measure as this has got to be," answered the major, not a little satisfied with the strength of feeling manifested by his father. "Yet has this been done, sir, and done in a way that it will not be easy to recall. Those who now resist us, resist for the sake of throwing off all connection with England."

"Has France any agency in this, Bob? I own it startles me, and has a French look."

"It has driven many of the most respectable of our enemies into our arms, sir. We have never considered you a direct enemy, though unhappily inclining too much against us; 'but this will determine Sir Hugh,' said the Commander-in-chief in our closing interview—I suppose you know, my dear father, that all your old friends, knowing what has happened, insist on calling you, Sir Hugh. I assure you I never open my lips on the subject; and yet Lord Howe drank to the health of Sir Hugh Willoughby, openly at his own table, the last time I had the honor to dine with him."

"Then the next time he favors you with an invitation, Bob, be kind enough to thank him. I want no empty baron etcy, nor do I ever think of returning to England to live. Were all I had on earth drummed together it would barely make out a respectable competency for a private gentleman in that extravagant state of society; and what is a mere name to one in such circumstances? I wish it were transferable, my dear boy, in the old Scotch mode, and you should be Sir Bob before you slept."

"But, Willougby, it may be useful to Robert, and why should he not have the title, since neither you nor I care for it?" asked the considerate mother.

"So he may, my dear; though he must wait for an event that I fancy you are not very impatient to witness—my death. When I am gone, let him be Sir Robert in welcome. But, Bob—for plain, honest Bob you must remain until then, unless, indeed, you earn your spurs in this unhappy war—have you any military tidings for us? We have heard nothing since the arrival of the fleet on the coast."

"We are in New York, after routing Washington on Long Island. The rebels"—the major spoke a little more confidently than had been his wont—"the rebels have retreated into the high country, near the borders of Connecticut, where they have inveterate nests of the disaffected in their rear."

"And has all this been done without bloodshed? Washington had stuff in him in the old French business?"

"His stuff is not doubted, sir; but his men make miserable work of it. Really I am sometimes ashamed of having been born in the country. These Yankees fight like wrangling women, rather than soldiers."

"How's this? You spoke honestly of the affair at Lexington, and wrote us a frank account of the murderous work at Bunker Hill. Have their natures changed with the change of season?"

"To own the truth, sir, they did wonders on the Hill, and not badly in the other affair; but all their spirit seems gone. I am quite ashamed of them. Perhaps this declaration of independence, as it is called, has damped their ardor."

"No, my son—the change, if change there is, depends on a general and natural law. Nothing but discipline and long training can carry men with credit through a campaign in the open field. Fathers, and husbands, and brothers, and lovers make formidable enemies in sight of their own chimney-tops; but the most flogging regiments, we used to say, were the best fighting regiments for a long pull. But have a care, Bob; you are now of a rank that may well get you a separate command, and do not despise your enemy. I know these Yankees well—you are one yourself, though only half-blooded; but I

know them well, and have often seen them tried. They are very apt to be badly commanded, heaven cursing them for their sins in this form more than any other—but get them fairly at work, and the guards will have as much as they can wish to get along with. Woods will swear to that."

"Objecting to the mode of corroboration, my dear sir, I can support its substance. Inclined as I am to uphold Cæsar, and to do honor to the Lord's anointed, I will not deny my countrymen's courage; though I think, Willoughby, now I recall old times, it was rather the fashion of our officers to treat it somewhat disrespectfully."

"It was, indeed," answered the captain, thoughtfully—"and a silly thing it was. They mistook the nature of a mild and pacific people, totally without the glitter and habits of military life, for a timid people; and I have often heard the new hands in the colonies speak of their inhabitants with contempt on this very head. Braddock had that failing to a great degree; and yet this very Major Washington saved his army from annihilation when it came to truly desperate work. Mark the words of a much older soldier than yourself, Bob; you may have more of the bravery of apparel, and present a more military aspect; may even gain advantages over them by means of higher discipline, better arms, and more accurate combinations; but when you meet them fairly, depend on it, you will meet dangerous foes, and men capable of being sooner drilled into good soldiers than any nation I have met with. Their great curse is, and probably will be, in selecting too many of their officers from classes not imbued with proper military pride, and altogether without the collaterals of a good military education."

To all this the major had nothing very material to object, and remembering that the silent but thoughtful Beulah had a husband in what he called the rebel ranks, he changed the subject. Arrangements were now made for the comfort and privacy of the unlooked-for guest. Adjoining the library, a room with no direct communication with the court by means of either door or window, was a small and retired apartment containing a cot-bed, to which the captain was accustomed to retire in the cases of indisposition, when Mrs. Willoughby wished to have either of her daughters with herself, on their account, or on her own. This room was now given to the major, and in it he would be perfectly free from every sort of intrusion. He might eat in the library, if necessary; though all the windows of that wing of the house opening outward, there was little danger of being seen by any but the regular domestics of the family, all of whom were to be let into the secret of his presence, and all of whom were rightly judged to be perfectly trustworthy.

As the evening promised to be dark, it was determined among the gentlemen that the major should disguise himself still more than he was already, and venture outside of the building, in company with his father and the chaplain, as soon as the people, who were now crowded into the vacant rooms in the empty part of the house, had taken possession of their respective quarters for the night. In the meantime a hearty supper was provided for the traveler in the library, the bullet-proof window shutters of that room, and indeed of all the others on that side of the building, having first been closed, in order that lights might be used without drawing a shot from the adjoining forest.

"We are very safe here," observed the captain, as his son appeased his hunger with the keen relish of a traveler. "Even Woods might stand a siege in a house built and stockaded like this. Every window has solid bullet-proof shutters, with fastenings not easily broken; and the logs of the buildings might almost defy round-shot. The gates are all up, one leaf excepted, and that leaf stands nearly in its place, well propped and supported. In the morning it shall be hung like the others. Then the stockade is complete, and has not a speck of decay about it yet. We shall keep a guard of twelve men up the whole night, with three sentinels outside of the buildings; and all of us will sleep in our clothes, and on our arms. My plan, should an assault be made, is to draw in

the sentinels as soon as they have discharged their pieces, to close the gate, and man the loops. The last are all open, and spare arms are distributed at them. I had a walk made within the ridge of the roofs this spring, by which men can run round the whole Hut in the event of an attempt to set fire to the shingles, or fire over the ridge at an enemy at the stockades. It is a great improvement, Bob; and, as it is well railed, will make a capital station in a warm conflict before the enemy make their way within the stockade."

"We must endeavor not to let them get there, sir," answered the major; "but as soon as your people are housed I shall have an opportunity to reconnoiter! Open work is most to the taste of us regulars."

"Not against an Indian enemy. You will be glad of such a fortress as this, boy, before the question of independence or no independence shall be finally settled. Did not Washington intrench in the town?"

"Not much on that side of the water, sir; though he was reasonably well in the ground on Long Island. There he had many thousands of men, and works of some extent."

"And how did he get off the island?" demanded the captain, turning round to look his son in the face. "The arm of the sea is quite half a mile in width at that point—how did he cross it in the face of a victorious army? or did he only save himself while you captured his troops?"

The major colored a little, and then he looked at Beulah and smiled good-naturedly.

"I am so surrounded by rebels here," he said, "that it is not easy to answer all your questions, sir. Beat him we did, beyond a question, and that with a heavy loss to his army—and out of New York we have driven him, beyond a question—but—I will not increase Beulah's conceit by stating any more!"

"If you can tell me anything kind of Evert, Bob, you will act like a brother in so doing," said the gentle wife.

"Ay, Beekman did well, too, they said. I heard some of our officers extolling a charge he made, and, to own the truth, I was not sorry to be able to say he was my sister's husband, since a fierce rebel she would marry. All our news of him is to his credit; and now I shall get a kiss for my pains."

The major was not mistaken. With a swelling heart, but smiling countenance, his sister threw herself into his arms, when she kissed and was kissed until the tears streamed down her cheeks.

"It was of Washington I intended to speak, sir," resumed the major, dashing a tear or two from his own eyes, as Beulah resumed her chair. "His retreat from the island is spoken of as masterly, and has gained him great credit. He conducted it in person, and did not lose a man. I heard Sir William mention it as masterly."

"Then, by Heaven, America will prevail in this contest!" exclaimed the captain, striking his fist upon the table with a suddenness and force that caused all in the room to start. "If she has a general who can effect such a movement skillfully, the reign of England is over, here. Why, Woods, Xenophon never did a better thing! The retreat of the ten thousand was boy's play to getting across that water. Besides, your victory could have been no great matter, Bob, or it would never have been done."

"Our victory was respectable, sir, while I acknowledge that the retreat was great. No one among us denies it, and Washington is always named with respect in the army."

In a minute more, Big Smash came in, under the pretense of removing the dishes, but in reality to see Master Bob, and to be noticed by him. She was a woman of sixty, the mother of Little Smash, herself a respectable matron of forty; and both had been born in the household of Mrs. Willoughby's father, and had rather more attachment for any one of her children than for all of their own, though each had been reasonably prolific. The *soubriquets* had passed into general use, and the real names of Bess and Mari' were nearly obsolete. Still, the major thought it polite to use the latter on the present occasion.

"Upon my word, Mrs. Bess," he said, shaking the old woman cordially by the

hand, though he instinctively shrank back from the sight of a pair of lips that were quite ultra, in the way of pouting, which used often to salute him twenty years before—"upon my word, Mrs. Bess, you improve in beauty every time I see you. Old age and you seem to be total strangers to each other. How do you manage to remain so comely and so young?"

"God send 'e fus', Masser Bob, heabben be praise, and a good conscience do 'e las'. I do wish you could make ole Plin hear dat! He nebber t'ink any good look, nowaday, in a ole wench."

"Pliny is half blind. But that is the way with most husbands, Smash; they become blind to the charms of their spouses after a few years of matrimony."

"Nebber get marry, Masser Bob, if that be 'e way."

Then Great Smash gave such a laugh, and such a swing of her unwieldy body, that one might well have apprehended her downfall. But no such thing. She maintained the equilibrium; for, renowned as she had been all her life at producing havoc among plates, and cups, and bowls, she was never known to be thrown off her own center of gravity. Another hearty shake of the hand followed, and the major quitted the table. As was usual on all great and joyous occasions in the family, when the emotions reached the kitchen, that evening was remarkable for a "smash," in which half the crockery that had just been brought from the table, fell an unresisting sacrifice. This produced a hot discussion between "The Big" and "The Little," as to the offender, which resulted, as so often happens in these inquiries into the accidents of domestic life, in the conclusion that "nobody" was alone to blame.

"How 'e t'ink he can come back, and not a plate crack!" exclaimed Little Smash, in a vindicatory tone, she being the real delinquent. "Get in 'e winder, too! Lor! that enough to break all 'e dish in 'e house, and in 'e mill, too! I do wish ebbery plate we got was an Injin—den you see fun! Can nebber like Injin; 'em so red and so sabbage!"

"Nebber talk of Injin, now," answered the indignant mother—"better talk of plate. Dis make forty t'ousand dish you break, Mari', sin' you war' a young woman. S'pose you t'ink Masser made of plate, dat you break 'em up so! Dat what ole Plin say—de nigger! He say all men made of clay, and plate made of clay, too—well, bot' clay and bot' break. All on us wessels, and all on us break to pieces some day, and den dey'll t'row us away, too."

A general laugh succeeded this touch of morality, Great Smash being a little addicted to ethical remarks of this nature; after which the war was renewed on the subject of the broken crockery. Nor did it soon cease; wrangling, laughing, singing, toiling, a light-heartedness that knew no serious cares and affection, making up the sum of the every-day existence of these semi-civilized beings. The presence of the party in the valley, however, afforded the subject of an episode; for a negro has quite as much of the *de haut en bas* in his manner of viewing the aborigines, as the whites have in their speculations on his own race. Mingled with this contempt, notwithstanding, was a very active dread; neither of the Plinies, nor their amiable consorts, in the least relishing the idea of being shorn of their wool with shears as penetrating as the scalping-knife. After a good deal of discussion on this subject, the kitchen arrived at the conclusion that the visit of the major was ordered by Providence, since it was out of all the rules of probability and practice to have a few half-clad savages get the better of "Masser Bob," who was born a soldier, and had so recently been fighting for the King.

On the latter subject, we ought to have stated that the captain's kitchen was ultra royal. The rude but simple beings it contained had a reverence for rank and power that even a "rebbelushun" could not disturb, and which closely associated in their minds royal authority with divine power. Next to their own master, they considered George III. as the greatest man of the age; and there was no disposition in them to rob him of his rights or his honors.

"You seem thoughtful, Woods," said the captain, while his son had retired to his own room, in order to assume a disguise less likely to attract attention in the garrison than a hunting suit. "Is it this unexpected visit of Bob's that furnishes food for reflection?"

"Not so much his visit, my dear Willoughby, as the news he brings us. God knows what will befall the Church should this rebellion make a serious head. The country is in a dreadful way already on the subject of religion, but it will be far worse if these 'canters' get the upper hand of the government."

The captain was silent and thoughtful for a moment; then laughingly replied—

"Fear nothing for the Church, chaplain. It is of God, and will outlast a hundred political revolutions."

"I don't know that, Willoughby—I don't know that." The chaplain did not exactly mean what he said—"'Twouldn't surprise me if we had 'taking up collections,' 'sitting under preaching,' 'providentially happening,' 'exercised in mind,' and 'our Zion,' finding their way into dictionaries."

"Quite likely, Woods," returned the captain, smiling. "Liberty is known to produce great changes in things; why not in language?"

"Liberty, indeed! Yes; 'liberty in prayer' is another of their phrases. Well, Captain Willoughby, if this rebellion should succeed, we may give up all hopes for the church. What sort of government shall we have, do you imagine, sir?"

"Republican, of course," answered the captain, again becoming thoughtful, as his mind reverted to the important results that were really dependent on the present state of things. "Republican—it can be no other. These colonies have always had a strong bias in that direction, and they want the elements necessary to a monarchy. New York has a landed gentry, it is true; and so have Maryland and Virginia, and the Carolinas; but they are not strong enough to set up a political aristocracy, or to prop a throne; and then this gentry will probably be much weakened by the struggle. Half the principal families are known to be with the crown as it is; and new men will force them out of place in a revolution. No, Woods, if this revolution prosper, the monarchy is done in America for at least a century."

"And the prayers for the King and royal family—what will become of them?"

"I should think they must cease, also. I question if a people will continue long to pray for authorities that they refuse to obey."

"I shall stick to the rubrics as long as I have a tongue in my head. I trust, Willoughby, you will not stop these prayers in your settlement?"

"It is the last mode in which I should choose to show hostility. Still you must allow it is a little too much to ask a congregation to pray that the King shall overcome his enemies, when they are among those very enemies? The question presents a dilemma."

"And yet I have never failed to read that prayer, as well as all the rest. You have not objected, hitherto."

"I have not, for I have considered the war as being waged with parliament and the ministers, whereas it is now clearly with the King. This paper is certainly a plain and forcible document."

"And what is that paper? Not the Westminster Confession of Faith, or the Saybrook Platform, I hope; one of which will certainly supersede the Thirty-nine Articles in all our churches if this rebellion prosper."

"It is the manifesto issued by Congress to justify their declaration of independence. Bob has brought it with him as a proof how far matters have been carried; but really it seems to be a creditable document, and is eloquently reasoned."

"I see how it is, Willoughby—I see how it is. We shall find you a rebel general yet; and I expect to live to hear you talk about 'our Zion' and 'providential accidents.'"

"Neither, Woods. For the first, I am too old; and for the last I have too much taste, I trust. Whether I shall always pray for the King is another matter. But here is the major ready for his sortie.

Upon my word his masquerade is so complete, I hardly know him myself."

CHAPTER XIV.

"He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day;
But walked him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strewed the strand."
—*Siege of Corinth.*

It was now so late that most of the men of the Hut, and all the women and children, were housed for the night, provided no alarm occurred. There was consequently little risk in the major's venturing forth, disguised as he was, should care be taken not to approach a light. The great number of the latter, streaming through the windows of the western wing of the building, showed how many were now collected within the walls, and gave an unusual appearance of life and animation to the place. Still the court was clear, the men seeking their pallets in readiness for their coming watches, while the women were occupied with those great concerns of female life, the care of children.

The captain, major and chaplain, each carrying a rifle, and the two former pistols, moved rapidly across the court, and passed the gate. The movable leaf of the latter was left unbarred, it being the orders of the captain to the sentinels, without, on the approach of an enemy, to retire within the court and then to secure the fastenings.

The night was starlight, and it was cool, as is common to this region of country. There being neither lamp nor candle on the exterior of the house, even the loops being darkened, there was little danger of moving about within the stockades. The sentinels were directed to take their posts so near the palisades as to command views of the open lawn without, a precaution that would effectually prevent the usual stealthy approach of an enemy without discovery. As the alarm had been very decided, these irregular guardians of the house were all at their posts, and exceedingly watchful, a circumstance that enabled the captain to avoid them, and thus further remove the danger of his son being recognized. He accordingly held himself aloof from the men, keeping within the shadows of the sides of the Hut.

As a matter of course, the first object to which our two soldiers directed their eyes, was the rock above the mill. The Indians had lighted fires, and were now apparently bivouacked at no great distance from them, having brought boards from below with that especial object. Why they chose to remain in this precise position, and why they neglected the better accommodations afforded by some fifteen or twenty log-cabins that skirted the western side of the valley in particular, were subjects of conjecture. That they were near the fires the board shanties proved, and that they were to the last degree careless of the proximity of the people of the place, would seem also to be apparent in the fact that they had not posted, so far as could be ascertained, even a solitary sentinel.

"This is altogether surprising for Indian tactics," observed the captain in a low voice; for everything that was uttered that night without the building was said in very guarded tones. "I have never before known the savages to cover themselves in that manner; nor is it usual with them to light fires to point out the positions they occupy, as these fellows seem to have done."

"Is it not all seeming, sir?" returned the major. "To me that camp, if camp it can be called, has an air of being deserted.

"There is a look about it of premeditated preparation, that one ought always to distrust in war.

"Is it not unmilitary, sir, for two soldiers like ourselves to remain in doubt on such a point? My professional pride revolts at such a state of things; and with your leave, I will go outside and set the matter at rest by reconnoitering."

"Professional pride is a good thing, Bob, rightly understood and rightly practiced. But the highest point of honor with the really good soldier is to do that

for which he was precisely intended. Some men fancy armies were got together just to maintain certain exaggerated notions of military honor; whereas, military honor is nothing but a moral expedient to aid in effecting the objects for which they are really raised. I have known men so blinded as to assert that a soldier is bound to maintain his honor at the expense of the law; and this in the face of the fact that, in a free country, a soldier is in truth nothing but one of the props of the law, in the last resort. So with us; we are here to defend this house and those it contains; and our military honor is far more concerned in doing that effectually, and by right means, than in running the risk of not doing it at all, in order to satisfy an abstract and untenable notion of a false code. Let us do what is right, my son, and feel no concern that our honor suffer."

Captain Willoughby said this, because he fancied it a fault in his son's character, sometimes to confound the end with the means, in appreciating the ethics of his profession. This is not an uncommon error among those who bear arms, instances not being wanting in which bodies of men that are the mere creatures of authority, have not hesitated to trample the power that brought them into existence under foot, rather than submit to mortify the feelings of a purely conventional and exaggerated pride. The major was rebuked rather than convinced, it not being the natural vocation of youth to perceive the justice of all the admonitions of age,

"But, if one can be made auxiliary to the other, sir," the son remarked, "then you will allow that professional *esprit*, and professional prudence, may very well march hand in hand."

"Of that there can be no doubt, though I think it far more wiser and soldier-like, even, to use all proper precautions to guard this house, under our actual circumstances. than to risk anything material in order to satisfy our doubts concerning the state of that camp."

"But the cabins, and all the property that lies exposed to fire and other accidents, including the mills? Is it not worth your while to let me make a little excursion in order to ascertain the state of things as connected with them?"

"Perhaps it would, Bob," returned the father, after a little reflection. "It would be a great point gained to send a man to look after the buildings and the horses. The poor beasts may be suffering for water; and, as you say, the first thing will be to ascertain where our wild visitors really are, and what they are actually bent on. Woods, go with us to the gate and let us out. I rely on your saying nothing of our absence, except to explain to the two nearest sentinels who we are, and to be on the lookout for us against the moment we may return."

"Will it not be very hazardous to be moving in front of the stockade in the dark? Some of our own people may fire upon you."

"You will tell them to be cautious, and we shall use great circumspection in our turn. I had better give you a signal by which we shall be known."

This was done, and the party moved from under the shadows of the Hut down to the gate. Here the two soldiers halted for several minutes, taking a deliberate and as thorough a survey of the scene without as the darkness permitted. Then the chaplain opened the gate, and they issued forth, moving with great caution down the lawn toward the flats. As a matter of course, Captain Willoughby was perfectly familiar with all the lanes, ditches, bridges, and fields of his beautiful possessions. The alluvial soil that lay spread around him was principally the result of ages of deposit while the place was covered with water; but, as the overflowing of the water had been produced by a regular dam, the latter once removed, the meadows were free from the excessive moisture which generally saturates drained lands. Still, there were two or three large open ditches to collect the water that came down the adjacent mountains, or bubbled up from springs near the margin of the woods. Across these ditches the roads led, by bridges, and the whole valley was laid out in this manner, equally with a view to convenience and

rural beauty. A knowledge of all the windings was of great use on the present occasion, even on the advance; while on the retreat it might clearly be the means of preserving the lives or liberties of the two adventurers.

The captain did not proceed by the principal road which led from the Hut to the mills, the great thoroughfare of the valley, since it might be watched, in order to prevent a hostile sortie against the camp; but he inclined to the right, or to the westward, in order to visit the cabins and barns in that quarter. It struck him his invaders might have quietly taken possession of the houses, or even have stolen his horses and decamped. In this direction, then, he and his son proceeded, using the greatest caution in their movements, and occasionally stopping to examine the waning fires at the rock, or to throw a glance behind them at the stockade. Everything remained in the quiet which renders a forest settlement so solemn and imposing after the daily movements of man have ceased. The deepest and most breathless attention could not catch an unaccustomed sound. Even the bark of a dog was not heard, all those useful animals having followed their masters into the Hut, as if conscious that their principal care now lay in that direction. Each of the sentinels had one of these animals near him, crouched under the stockade, in the expectation of their giving the alarm should any strange footstep approach. In this manner most of the distance between the Knoll and the forest was crossed, when the major suddenly laid a hand on his father's arm.

"Here is something stirring on our left," whispered the former; "it seems, too, to be crouching under the fence."

"You have lost your familiarity with our rural life, Bob," answered the father, with a little more confidence of tone but still guardedly, "or this fragrant breath would tell you we are almost on a cow. It is old Whiteback; I know her by her horns. Feel; she is here in the lane with us, and within reach of your hand. A gentler animal is not in the settlement. But stop, pass your hand on her udder, she will not stir; how is it, full or not?"

"If I can judge, sir, it is nothing remarkable in the way of size."

"I understand this better. By Jupiter, boy, that cow has been milked! It is certain that none of our people have left the house to do it since the alarm was first given. This is ominous of neighbors."

The major made no reply, but he felt to ascertain if his arms were in a state for immediate service. After a moment's further pause the captain proceeded, moving with increased caution. Not a word was now uttered, for they were getting within the shadows of the orchard, and indeed of the forest, where objects could not well be distinguished at the distance of a very few yards. A cabin was soon reached, and it was found empty; the fire reduced to a few embers, and quite safe. This was the residence of the man who had the care of the horses, the stables standing directly behind it. Captain Willoughby was a thoughtful and humane man, and it struck him the animals might now be turned into a field that joined the barnyard, where there was not only rich pasture, but plenty of sweet running water. This he determined to do at once, the only danger being from the unbridled movements of cattle that must be impatient from unusual privation and a prolonged restraint.

The major opened the gate of the field and stationed himself in a way to turn the animals in the desired direction, while his father went into the stable to set them free. The first horse came out with great deliberation, being an old animal well cooled at the plow, and the major had merely to swing his arm to turn him into the field. Not so with the next, however. This was little better than a colt, a creature in training for his master's saddle; and no sooner was it released than it plunged into the yard, then bounded into the field, around which it galloped until it found the water. The others imitated this bad example; the clatter of hoofs, though beaten on a rich turf, soon resounding in the stillness of the night, until it might be heard across the valley. The captain then rejoined his son.

"This is a good deed somewhat clumsily done, Bob," observed the father, as he picked up his rifle and prepared to proceed. "An Indian ear, however, will not fail to distinguish between the tramping of horses and a charge of foot."

"Faith, sir, the noise may serve us a good turn yet. Let us take another look at the fires, and see if this tramping has set any one in motion near them. We can get a glimpse a little further ahead."

The look was taken, but nothing was seen. While standing perfectly motionless beneath the shadows of an apple-tree, however, a sound was heard quite near them, which resembled that of a guarded footstep. Both gentlemen drew up like sportsmen expecting the birds to rise, in waiting for the sound to approach. It did draw nearer, and presently a human form was seen moving slowly forward in the path, approaching the tree, as if to get within its cover. It was allowed to draw nearer and nearer, until Captain Willoughby laid his hand, from behind the trunk, on the stranger's shoulder demanding sternly, but in a low voice, "who are you?"

The start, the exclamation and the tremor that succeeded, all denoted the extent of this man's surprise. It was some little time, even before he could recover from his alarm, and then he let himself be known by his answer.

"Massy!" exclaimed Joel Strides, who ordinarily gave this Doric sound to the word "mercy"—"Massy, captain, is it you? I should as soon thought of seeing a ghost! What in natur' has brought you out of the stockade, sir?"

"I think that is a question I might better ask you, Mr. Strides. My orders were to keep the gate closed, and for no one to quit the court-yard even, until sent on post, or called by an alarm."

"True sir—quite true—true as gospel. But let us moderate a little, captain, and speak lower; for the Lord only knows who is in our neighborhood. Who's that with you, sir?—Not the Rev. Mr. Woods, is it?

"No matter who is with me. *He* has the authority of my commands for being here, whoever he may be, while you are here in opposition to them. You know me well enough, Joel, to understand nothing but the simple truth will satisfy me."

"Lord, sir, I am one of them that never wish to tell you anything but truth. The captain has known me now long enough to understand my natur', I should think; so no more need be said about that."

"Well, sir—give me the reason—and see that it is given to me without reserve."

"Yes, sir; the captain shall have it. He knows we scrambled out of our houses this afternoon a little onthinkingly, Injin alarms being skeary matters. It was an awful hurrying time! Well, the captain understands, too, we don't work for him without receiving our wages; and I have been laying up a little every year, until I've scraped together a few hundred dollars in good half-joes; and I bethought me the money might be in danger, should the savages begin to plunder; and I've just come out to look a'ter the money."

"If this be true, as I hope and can easily believe to be the case, you must have the money about you, Joel, to prove it."

The man stretched forth his arm, and let the captain feel a handkerchief, in which, sure enough, there was a goodly quantity of coin. This gave him credit for truth, and removed all suspicion of his present excursion being made with any sinister intention. The man was questioned as to his mode of passing the stockade, when he confessed he had fairly clambered over it, an exploit of no great difficulty from the inside. As the captain had known Joel too long to be ignorant of his love of money, and the offense was very pardonable in itself, he readily forgave the breach of orders. This was the only man in the valley who did not trust his little hoard in the iron chest at the Hut, even the miller reposing that much confidence in the proprietor of the estate; but Joel was too conscious of dishonest intentions himself to put any unnecessary faith in others.

All this time, the major kept so far aloof as not to be recognized, though Joel

once or twice betrayed symptoms of a desire to ascertain who he was. Maud had awakened suspicions that now became active, in both father and son, when circumstances so unexpectedly and inconveniently threw the man in their way. It was consequently the wish of the former to get rid of his overseer as soon as possible. Previously to doing this, however, he saw fit to interrogate him a little further.

"Have you seen anything of the Indians since you left the stockade, Strides?" demanded the captain. "We can perceive no other traces of their presence than yonder fires, though we think that some of them must have passed this way, for Whiteback's udder is empty."

"To own the truth, captain, I haven't. I some think that they've left the valley; though the Lord only can tell when they'll be back ag'in. Such critturs be beyond calcilation! They outdo arithmetic, nohow. As for the cow, I milked her myself; for being the crittur the captain has given to Phœbe for her little dairy, I thought it might hurt her not to be attended to. The pail stands yonder under the fence, and the women and children under the Hut may be glad enough to see it in the morning."

This was very characteristic of Joel Strides. He did not hesitate about disobeying orders, or even to risk his life in order to secure his money; but determined to come out, he had the forethought and care to bring a pail, in order to supply the wants of those who were now crowded within the stockade, and who were too much accustomed to this particular sort of food not to suffer from its absence. If we add, that in the midst of all this prudent attention to the wants of his companions, Joel had an eye to his personal popularity and what are called "ulterior events," and that he selected his own cow for the precise reason given, the reader has certain distinctive traits of the man before him.

"This being the case," returned the captain, a good deal relieved at finding that the savages had not been the agents in this milking affair, since it left the probability of their remaining stationary, "this being the case, Joel, you had better find the pail and go in. As soon as day dawns, however, I recommend that all the cows be called up to the stockade and milked generally. They are feeding in the lanes just now, and will come readily, if properly invited. Go then, but say nothing of having met me, and—"

"Who else did the captain say!" inquired Joel, curiously, observing that the other paused.

"Say nothing of having met us at all, I tell you. It is very important that my movements should be secret."

The two gentlemen now moved on, intending to pass in front of the cabins which lined this part of the valley, by a lane which would bring them out at the general highway which led from the Knoll to the mill. The captain marched in front, while his son brought up the rear, at a distance of two or three paces. Each walked slowly and with caution, carrying his rifle in the hollow of his arm, in perfect readiness for service. In this manner both had proceeded a few yards when Robert Willoughby felt his elbow touched, and saw Joel's face within eighteen inches of his own, as the fellow peered under his hat. It was an action so sudden and unexpected, that the major saw, at once, nothing but perfect coolness could avert his discovery.

"Is't you, Dan'l"—so was the miller named. "What in natur' has brought the old man on this tramp, with the valley filled with Injins?" whispered Joel, prolonging the speech in order to get a better view of a face and form that still baffled his conjectures. "Let's know all about it."

"You'll get me into trouble," answered the major, shaking off his unwelcome neighbor, moving a step further from him, and speaking also in a whisper. "The captain's bent on a scout, and you know he'll not bear contradiction. Off with you, then, and don't forget the milk."

As the major moved away and seemed determined to baffle him, Joel had no choice between complying and exposing his disobedience of orders to the captain. He disliked doing the last, for his cue was to seem respectful and attached, and he was fain to submit. Never, before, how-

ever, did Joel Strides suffer a man to slip through his fingers with so much reluctance. He saw that the captain's companion was not the miller, while the disguise was too complete to enable him to distinguish the person or face. In that day the different classes of society were strongly distinguished from each other by their ordinary attire; and accustomed to see Major Willoughby only in the dress that belonged to his station, he would not be likely to recognize him in his present guise had he even known of or suspected his visit. As it was, he was completely at fault; satisfied it was not his friend Daniel, while unable to say who it was.

In this doubting state of mind Joel actually forgot the savages, and the risks he might run from their proximity. He walked, as it might be, mechanically, to the place where he had left the pail, and then proceeded slowly toward the Knoll, pondering at every step on what he had just seen. He and the miller had secret communications with certain active agents of the revolutionists, that had put them in possession of facts, notwithstanding their isolated position, with which even their employer was totally unacquainted. It is true, these agents were of that low caste that never fail to attach themselves to all great political enterprises, with a sole view to their own benefit; still, as they were active, cunning, and bold, and had the sagacity to make themselves useful, they passed in the throng of patriots created by the times, and were enabled to impart to men of similar spirit much available information.

It was through means like these that Joel knew of the all-important measure of the Declaration of Independence, while it still remained a secret to Captain Willoughby. The hope of confiscations was now active in the bosoms of all the set, and many of them had even selected the portions of property that they intended should be the reward of their own love of freedom and patriotism. It has been said that the English ministry precipitated the American Revolution, with a view to share among their favorites the estates that it was thought it would bring within the gift of the crown—a motive so heinous as almost to defy belief, and which may certainly admit of rational doubts. On the other hand, however, it is certain that individuals who will go down to posterity in company with the many justly illustrious names that the events of 1776 have committed to history, were actuated by the most selfish inducements, and in divers instances enriched themselves with the wrecks of estates that formerly belonged to their kinsmen or friends. Joel Strides was of too low a class to get his name enrolled very high on the list of heroes, nor was he at all ambitious of any such distinction; but he was not so low that he could not and did not aspire to become the owner of the property of the Hutted Knoll. In an ordinary state of society so high a flight would seem irrational in so low an aspirant; but Joel came of a people who seldom measure their pretensions by their merits, and who imagine that to boldly aspire, more especially in the way of money, is the first great step to success.

The much-talked-of and little-understood doctrine of political equality has this error to answer for, in thousands of cases; for nothing can be more hopeless in the nature of things than to convince a man of the necessity of possessing qualities of whose existence he has not even a faint perception, ere he may justly pretend to be put on a level with the high-minded, the just, the educated, and the good. Joel, therefore, saw no other reason than the law against his becoming the great landlord as well as Captain Willoughby, and could the law be so molded as to answer his purposes, he had discreetly resolved to care for no other considerations. The thought of the consequences to Mrs. Willoughby and her daughters gave him no concern whatever; they had already possessed the advantages of their situation so long as to give Phœbe and the miller's wife a sort of moral claim to succeed them. In a word, Joel, in his yearnings after wealth, had only faintly shadowed forth the modern favorite doctrine of "rotation in office."

The appearance of a stranger in company with Captain Willoughby could not

fail, therefore, to give rise to many conjectures in the mind of a man whose daily and hourly thoughts were running on these important changes. "Who can it be?" thought Joel, as he crawled along the lane, bearing the milk, and lifting one leg after the other, as if lead was fastened to his feet. "Dan'el it is not—nor is it any one that I can consait on, about the Hut. The captain is mightily strengthened by this marriage of his da'ter with Colonel Beekman, that's sartin. The colonel stands wonderful well with our folks, and he'll not let all this first-rate land with such capital betterments go out of the family without an iffort, I conclude—but then I calcilate on his being killed—there must be a desperate lot on 'em shot, afore the war's over, and he is as likely to be among 'em as another. Dan'el thinks the colonel has the look of a short-lived man. Waal; tomorrow will bring about a knowledge of the name of the captain's companion, and then a body may calcilate with greater sartainty!"

This is but an outline of what passed through Joel's mind as he moved onward. It will serve, however, to let the reader into the secret of his thoughts, as well as into their ordinary train, and is essentially connected with some of the succeeding events of our legend. As the overseer approached the stockade, his ideas were so abstracted that he forgot the risk he ran; but walkingly carelessly toward the palisades, the dogs barked, and then he was saluted by a shot. This effectually aroused Joel, who called out in his natural voice, and probably saved his life by so doing. The report of the rifle, however, produced an alarm, and by the time the astounded overseer had staggered up to the gate, the men were pouring out from the court, armed, and expecting an assault. In the midst of this scene of confusion the chaplain admitted Joel, as much astonished as the man himself, at the whole of the unexpected occurrence.

It is unnecessary to say that many questions were asked. Joel got rid of them by simply stating that he had gone out to milk a cow, by the captain's private orders, and that he had forgotten to arrange any signal, by which his return might be known. He ventured to name his employer because he knew he was not there to contradict him; and Mr. Woods being anxious to ascertain if his two friends had been seen, sent the men back to their lairs without delay, detaining the overseer at the gate for a minute's private discourse. As the miller obeyed with the rest, he asked for the pail with an eye to his own children's comfort; but on receiving it he found it empty! The bullet had passed through it, and the contents had escaped.

"Did you see anything or person, Strides?" demanded the chaplain, as soon as the two were alone.

"Lord, Mr. Woods, I met the captain! the sight of him came over me a'most as cruelly as the shot from the rifle; for I no more expected it than I do to see you rise up to heaven in your clothes, like Elijah of old. Sure enough there was the captain himself, and—and—"

Here Joel sneezed, repeating the word "and" several times, in hopes the chaplain would supply the name he so much wished to hear.

"But you saw no savages? I know the captain is out, and you will be careful not to mention it, lest it get to Mrs. Willoughby's ears, and make her uneasy. You saw nothing of the savages?"

"Not a bit; the critturs lie cluss enough, if they haven't actually tramped. Who did you say was with the captain, Mr. Woods?"

"I said nothing about it—I merely asked after the Indians, who, as you say, do keep themselves very close. Well, Joel, go to your wife, who must be getting anxious about you, and be prudent."

Thus dismissed, the overseer did not dare to hesitate; but he entered the court, still pondering on the late meeting.

As for the two adventurers, they pursued their march in silence. As a matter of course they heard the report of the rifle, and caught some faint sounds from the alarm that succeeded; but readily comprehending the cause, they produced

no uneasiness; the stillness which succeeded soon satisfying them that all was right. By this time they were within a hundred yards of the flickering fires. The major had kept a strict watch on the shanties at the report of the rifle, but not a living thing was seen moving in their vicinity. This induced him to think the place was deserted, and he whispered as much to his father.

"With any other enemy than an Indian," answered the latter, "you might be right enough, Bob, but with these rascals one is never certain. We must advance with a good deal of their own caution."

This was done, and the gentlemen approached the fires in the most guarded manner, keeping the shanties between them and the light. By this time, however, the flames were nearly out, and there was no great difficulty in looking into the nearest shanty without much exposure. It was deserted, as proved to be the case with all the others, on further examination. Major Willoughby now moved about on the rock with greater confidence; for, naturally brave, and accustomed to use his faculties with self-command in moments of trial, he drew the just distinctions between real danger and unnecessary alarm, the truest of all tests of courage.

The captain, feeling a husband's and a father's responsibility, was a little more guarded; but success soon gave him more confidence, and the spot was thoroughly explored. The two then descended to the mills, which, together with the adjacent cabins, they entered also, and found uninjured and empty. After this, several other suspected points were looked at, until the captain came to the conclusion that the party had retired for the night at least, if not entirely. Making a circuit, however, he and his son visited the chapel and one or two dwellings on that side of the valley, when they bent their steps toward the Knoll.

As the gentlemen approached the stockade, the captain gave a loud hem, and clapped his hands. At the signal the gate flew open, and they found themselves in company with their friend the chaplain once more. A few words of explanation told all they had to say, and then the three passed into the court, and separated, each taking the direction toward his own room. The major, fatigued with the toils of a long march, was soon in a soldier's sleep; but it was hours before his more thoughtful and still uneasy father could obtain the rest which nature so much requires.

CHAPTER XV.

—"I could teach you,
How to chose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be; so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin
That I had been forsworn."—PORTIA.

CAPTAIN WILLOUGHBY knew that the hour which preceded the return of light, was that in which the soldier had the most to apprehend when in the field. This is the moment when it is usual to attempt surprises, and it was, in particular, the Indian's hour of blood. Orders had been left, accordingly, to call him at four o'clock, and to see that all the men of the Hut were afoot, and armed also. Notwithstanding the deserted appearance of the valley, this experienced frontier warrior distrusted the signs of the times; and he looked forward to the probability of an assault, a little before the return of day, with a degree of concern he would have been sorry to communicate to his wife and daughters.

Every emergency had been foreseen, and such a disposition made of the forces as to enable the major to be useful, in the event of an attack, without exposing himself unnecessarily to the danger of being discovered. He was to have charge of the defense of the rear of the Hut, or that part of the buildings where the windows opened outward; and Michael and the two Plinies were assigned him as assistants. Nor was the ward altogether a useless one. Though the cliff afforded a material safeguard to this portion of the defenses, it might be scaled; and it will be remembered there was no stockade at all on this, the northern end of the house.

When the men assembled in the court, therefore, about an hour before the dawn, Robert Willoughby collected his small force in the dining-room, the outer apartment of the suite, where he examined their arms by lamplight, inspected their accouterments, and directed them to remain until he issued fresh orders. His father, aided by Sergeant Joyce, did the same in the court, issuing out through the gate of the building with his whole force, as soon as this duty was performed. The call being general, the women and children were all up also; many of the former repairing to the loops, while the least resolute, or the less experienced of their number, administered to the wants of the young, or busied themselves with the concerns of the household. In a word, the Hut, at that early hour, resembled a hive in activity, though the different pursuits had not much affinity to the collection of honey.

It is not to be supposed that Mrs. Willoughby and her daughters still courted their pillows on an occasion like this. They rose with the others, the grandmother and Beulah bestowing their first care on the little Evert, as if his life and safety were the considerations uppermost in their thoughts. This seemed so natural that Maud wondered she too could not feel all this absorbing interest in the child, a being so totally dependent on the affection of its friends and relatives to provide for its wants and hazards in an emergency like the present.

"We will see to the child, Maud," observed her mother, ten or fifteen minutes after all were up and dressed. "Do you go to your brother, who will be solitary alone in his citadel. He may wish, too, to send some message to his father. Go, then, dear girl, and help to keep up poor Bob's spirits."

What a service for Maud! Still she went, without hesitation or delay; for the habits of her whole infancy were not to be totally overcome by the natural and more engrossing sentiments of her later years. She could not feel precisely the reserve and self-distrust with one she had so long regarded as a brother, as might have been the case with a stranger youth in whom she had begun to feel the interest she entertained for Robert Willoughby. But Maud did not hesitate about complying. An order from her mother to her was law; and she had no shame, no reserve on the subject of contributing to Bob's comfort or happiness.

Her presence was a great relief to the young man himself, whom she found in the library. His assistants were posted without, as sentinels to keep off intruders, a disposition that left him quite alone, anxious and uneasy. The only intercourse he could have with his father was by means of messages; and the part of the building he occupied was absolutely without any communication with the court except by a single door near the offices, at which he had stationed O'Hearn.

"This is kind and like yourself, dearest Maud," exclaimed the young man, taking the hand of his visitor, and pressing it in both his own, though he strangely neglected to kiss her cheek, as he certainly would have done, had it been Beulah. "This is kind and like yourself; now I shall learn something of the state of the family. How is my mother?"

It might have been native coyness, or even coquetry, that unconsciously to herself influenced Maud's answer. She knew not why—and yet she felt prompted to let it be understood that she had not come of her own impulses.

"Mother is well, and not at all alarmed," she said. "She and Beulah are busy with little Evert, who crows and kicks his heels about as if he despised danger, as becomes a soldier's son, and has much amused even me; though I am accused of insensibility to his perfections. Believing you might be solitary, or might wish to communicate with some of us, my mother desired me to come and inquire into your wants."

"Was such a bidding required, Maud? How long has an order been necessary to bring you to console me?"

"That is a calculation I have never entered into, Bob," answered Maud, slightly blushing and openly smiling, and that in a way, too, to take all the sting out of her

words—"as young ladies can have more suitable occupations, one might think. You will admit I guided you faithfully and skillfully into the Hut last evening, and such a service should suffice for the present. But my mother tells me we have proper cause of complaint against you, for having so thoughtlessly left the place of safety into which you were brought, and for going strolling about the valley, after we had retired, in a very heedless and boyish manner!"

"I went with my father; surely I could not have been in better company."

"At his suggestion, or at your own, Bob?" asked Maud, shaking her head.

"To own the truth, it was, in some degree, at my own. It seemed so very unmilitary for two old soldiers to allow themselves to be shut up in ignorance of what their enemies were at, that I could not resist the desire to make a little *sortie*. You must feel, dear Maud, that our motive was your safety—the safety, I mean, of my mother and Beulah, and all of you together—and you ought to be the last to blame us."

The tint on Maud's cheek deepened as Robert Willoughby laid so heavy an emphasis on "your safety;" but she could not smile on an act that risked so much more than was prudent.

"This is well enough as to motive," she said, after a pause; "but frightfully ill-judged, I should think, as to risks. You do not remember the importance our dear father is to us all—to my mother—to Beulah—even to me, Bob."

"Even to you, Maud! And why not as much to you as to any of us?"

Maud could speak to Beulah of her want of natural affinity to the family; but it far exceeded her self-command to make a direct allusion to it to Robert Willoughby. Still, it was now rarely absent from her mind; the love she bore the captain and his wife, and Beulah, and little Evert, coming to her heart through a more insidious and possibly tenderer tie than that of purely filial or sisterly affection. It was, indeed, this every-day regard, strangely deepened and enlivened by that collateral feeling we so freely bestow on them who are bound by natural ties to those who have the strongest holds on our hearts, and which causes us to see with their eyes, and to feel with their affections. Accordingly, no reply was made to the question; or, rather, it was answered by putting another.

"Did you see anything after all, to compensate for so much risk?" asked Maud, but not until a pause had betrayed her embarrassment.

"We ascertained that the savages had deserted their fires, and had not entered any of the cabins. Whether this were done to mislead us, or to make a retreat as sudden and unexpected as their inroad, we are altogether in the dark. My father apprehends treachery, however; while, I confess, to me it seems probable that the arrival and the departure may be altogether matters of accident. The Indians are in motion, certainly, for it is known that our agents are busy among them; but it is by no means so clear that our Indians would molest Captain Willoughby—Sir Hugh Willoughby, as my father is altogether called, at headquarters."

"Have not the Americans savages on their side, to do us this ill office?"

"I think not. It is the interest of the rebels to keep the savages out of the struggle; they have so much at risk, that this species of warfare can scarcely be to their liking."

"And ought it to be to the liking of the King's generals, or ministers either, Bob?"

"Perhaps not, Maud. I do not defend it; but I have seen enough of politics and war to know that results are looked to far more than principles. Honor, and chivalry, and humanity, and virtue, and right, are freely used in terms; but seldom do they produce much influence on facts. Victory is the end aimed at, and the means are made to vary with the object."

"And where is all we have read together? Yes, together, Bob? for I owe you a great deal for having directed my studies—where is all we have read about the glory and truth of the English name and cause?"

"Very much, I fear, Maud, where the

glory and truth of the American name and cause will be, as soon as this new nation shall fairly burst the shell, and hatch its public morality. There are men among us who believe in this public honesty, but I do not."

"You are then engaged in a bad cause, Major Willoughby, and the sooner you abandon it the better."

"I would in a minute, if I knew where to find a better. Rely on it, dearest Maud, all causes are alike, in this particular; though one side may employ instruments, as in the case of the savages, that the other side finds it its interest to decry. Men, as individuals, may be, and sometimes are, reasonably upright—but bodies of men, I much fear, never. The latter escape responsibility by dividing it."

"Still a good cause may elevate even bodies of men," said Maud thoughtfully.

"For a time, perhaps, but not in emergencies. You and I think it a good cause, my good and frowning Maud, to defend the rights of our sovereign lord the King. Beulah I have given up to the enemy; but on you I have implicitly relied."

"Beulah follows her heart, perhaps, as they say it is natural to women to do. As for myself, I am left free to follow my own opinion of my duties."

"And they lead you to espouse the cause of the King, Maud!"

"They will be very apt to be influenced by the notions of a certain Captain Willoughby, and Wilhelmina, his wife, who have guided me aright on so many occasions, that I shall not easily distrust their opinions on this."

The major disliked this answer; and yet when he came to reflect on it, as reflect he did a good deal in the course of the day, he was dissatisfied with himself at being so unreasonable as to expect a girl of twenty-one not to think with her parents, real or presumed, in most matters. At the moment, however, he did not wish further to press the point.

"I am glad to learn, Bob," resumed Maud, looking more cheerful and smiling, "that you met with no one in your rash sortie—for rash I shall call it, even though sanctioned by my father."

"I am wrong in saying that. We did meet with one man, and that was no less a person than your bugbear, Joel Strides—as innocent, though as meddling an overseer as one could wish to employ."

"Robert Willoughby, what mean you? Does this man know of your presence at the Knoll?"

"I should hope not—think not." Here the major explained all that is known to the reader on this head, when he continued—"The fellow's curiosity brought his face within a few inches of mine; yet I do not believe he recognized me. This disguise is pretty thorough; and what between his ignorance, the darkness, and the dress, I must believe he was foiled."

"Heaven be praised!" exclaimed Maud, breathing more freely. "I have long distrusted that man, though he seems to possess the confidence of every one else. Neither my father nor my mother will see him as I see him; yet to me his design to injure you is so clear—so obvious! I wonder, often wonder, that others cannot view it as I do. Even Beulah is blind!"

"And what do you see so clearly, Maud? I have consented to keep myself incog. in submission to your earnest request; and yet, to own the truth, I can discover no particular reason why Strides is to be mistrusted more than any one else in the valley—than Mike, for instance."

"Mike! I would answer for his truth with my life. He will never betray you, Bob!"

"But why is Joel so much the object of your distrust?—and why am I the particular subject of your apprehensions?"

Maud felt the tell-tale blood flowing again to her cheeks; since to give a simple and clear reason for her distrust exceeded her power. It was nothing but the keen interest which she took in Robert Willoughby's safety that had betrayed to her the truth; and as usually happens, when anxiety leads the way in discoveries of this sort, logical and plausible inferences are not always at command. Still, Maud not only thought herself right, but, in the main, she was right; and this she felt so

strongly as to be enabled to induce others to act on her impressions.

"Why I believe in Strides's sinister views is more than I may be able to explain to you in words, Bob," she replied after a moment's thought; "still I do believe in them as firmly as I believe in my existence. His looks, his questions, his journeys, and an occasional remark, have all aided in influencing the belief; nevertheless, no one proof may be perfectly clear and satisfactory. Why you should be the subject of his plans, however, is simple enough, since you are the only one among us he can seriously injure. By betraying you, he might gain some great advantage to himself."

"To whom can he betray me, dear? My father is the only person here in any authority, and of him I have no cause to be afraid."

"Yet you were so far alarmed when last here, as to change your route back to Boston. If there were cause for apprehension then, the same reason may now exist."

"That was when many strangers were in the valley, and we knew not exactly where we stood. I have submitted to your wishes, however, Maud, and shall lie *perdu* until there is a serious alarm; then it is understood I am to be permitted to show myself. In a moment of emergency my unexpected appearance among the men might have a dramatic effect, and, of itself, give us a victory. But tell me of my prospects—am I likely to succeed with my father? Will he be brought over to the royal cause?"

"I think not. All common inducements are lost on him. His baronetcy, for instance, he will never assume; that, therefore, cannot entice him. Then his feelings are with his adopted country, which he thinks right, and which he is much disposed to maintain; more particularly since Beulah's marriage, and our late intercourse with all that set. My mother's family, too, has much influence with him. They, you know, are all whigs."

"Don't prostitute the name, Maud. Whig does not mean rebel; these misguided men are neither more nor less than rebels. I had thought this Declaration of Independence would have brought my father at once to our side."

"I can see it has disturbed him, as did the Battle of Bunker's Hill. But he will reflect a few days, and decide now, as he did then, in favor of the Americans. He has English partialities, Bob, as is natural to one born in that country; but, on this point, his mind is very strongly American."

"The accursed Knoll has done this! Had he lived in society, as he ought to have done, among his equals and the educated, we should now see him at the head—Maud, I know I can confide in you."

Maud was pleased at his expression of confidence, and she looked up in the major's face, her full blue eyes expressing no small portion of the heartfelt satisfaction she experienced. Still she said nothing.

"You may well imagine," the major continued, "that I have not made this journey entirely without an object—I mean some object more important, even than to see you all. The commander-in-chief is empowered to raise several regiments in this country, and it is thought useful to put men of influence in the colonies at their head. Old Noll de Lancey, for instance, so well-known to us all, is to have a brigade; and I have a letter in my pocket offering to Sir Hugh Willoughby one of his regiments. One of the Allens of Pennsylvania, who was actually serving against us, has thrown up his commission from Congress, since this wicked Declaration, and has consented to take a battalion from the King. What think you of all this? Will it not have weight with my father?"

"It may cause him to reflect, Bob; but it will not induce him to change his mind. It may suit Mr. Oliver de Lancey to be a general, for he has been a soldier his whole life; but my father has retired, and given up all thoughts of service. He tells us he never liked it, and has been happier here at the Knoll than when he got his first commission. Mr. Allen's change of opinion may be well enough, he will say, but I have no need of change; I am here, with

my wife and daughters, and have them to care for in these troubled times. What think you he said, Bob, in one of his conversations with us, on this very subject?"

"I am sure I cannot imagine—though I rather fear it was some wretched political stuff of the day."

"So far from this, it was good natural feeling that belongs, or ought to belong, to all days and all ages," answered Maud, her voice trembling a little as she proceeded. "'There is my son,' he said; 'one soldier is enough in a family like this. He keeps all our hearts anxious, and may cause them all to mourn.'"

Major Willoughby was mute for quite a minute, looking rebuked and thoughtful.

"I feel I do cause my parents concern," he at length answered; "and why should I endeavor to increase that of my excellent mother by persuading her husband to return to the profession? If this were ordinary service I could not think of it. I do not know that I ought to think of it as it is!"

"Do not, dear Robert. We are all—that is, mother is often miserable on your account; and why would you increase her sorrows? Remember, that to tremble for one life is sufficient for a woman."

"My mother is miserable on my account!" answered the young man, who was thinking of anything but his father at that instant. "Does Beulah never express concern for me? or have her new ties completely driven her brother from her recollection? I know she can scarce wish me success; but she might still feel some uneasiness for an only brother. We are but two—"

Maud started, as if some frightful object glared before her eyes; then she sat in breathless silence, resolute to hear what would come next. But Robert Wiloughby meant to pursue that idea no further. He had so accustomed himself—had endeavored even so to accustom himself to think of Beulah as his only sister, that the words escaped him unconsciously. They were no sooner uttered, however, than the recollection of their possible effect on Maud crossed his mind. Profoundly ignorant of the true nature of her feelings toward himself, he had ever shrunk from a direct avowal of his own sentiments, lest he might shock her; as a sister's ear would naturally be wounded by a declaration of attachment from a brother; and there were bitter moments when he fancied delicacy and honor would oblige him to carry his secret with him to the grave. Two minutes of frank communication might have dissipated all these scruples forever; but how to obtain those minutes, or how to enter on the subject at all, were obstacles that often appeared insurmountable to the young man.

As for Maud, she but imperfectly understood her own heart—true, she had conscious glimpses of its real state; but it was through those sudden and ungovernable impulses that were so strangely mingled with her affections. It was years, indeed, since she had ceased to think of Robert Willoughby as a brother, and had begun to view him with different eyes; still she struggled with her feelings, as against a weakness. The captain and his wife were her parents; Beulah, her dearly, dearly beloved sister; little Evert, her nephew; and even the collaterals in and about Albany came in for a due share of her regard; while Bob, though called Bob as before; though treated with a large portion of the confidence that was natural to the intimacy of her childhood; though loved with a tenderness he would have given even his high-prized commission to know, was no longer thought of as a brother. Often did Maud find herself thinking, if never saying, "Beulah may do that, for Beulah is his sister; but it would be wrong in me. I may write to him, talk freely and even confidentially with him, and be affectionate to him; all this is right, and I should be the most ungrateful creature on earth to act differently; but I cannot sit on his knee as Beulah sometimes does; I cannot throw my arms round his neck when I kiss him as Beulah does; I cannot pat his cheek, as Beulah does, when he says anything to laugh at, nor can I pry into his seerets as Beulah does, or affects to do, to tease him. I should be more reserved with one who has not a drop of my blood in his veins—

no, not a single drop." In this way, indeed, Maud was rather fond of disclaiming any consanguinity with the family of Willoughby, even while she honored and loved its two heads, as parents. The long pause that succeeded the major's broken sentence was only interrupted by himself.

"It is vexatious to be shut up here, in the dark, Maud," he said, "when every minute may bring an attack. This side of the house might be defended by you and Beulah, aided and enlightened by the arm and counsels of that young 'son of liberty,' little Evert; whereas the stockade in front may really need the presence of men who have some knowledge of the noble art. I wish there were a lookout to the front, that one might at least see the danger as it approached."

"If your presence is not indispensable here, I can lead you to my painting-room, where there is a loop directly opposite the gate. That half of the garrets has no one in it."

The major accepted the proposal with joy, and forthwith he proceeded to issue a few necessary orders to his subordinates, before he followed Maud. When all was ready, the latter led the way, carrying a small silver lamp that she had brought with her on entering the library. The reader already understands that the Hut was built around a court; the portion of the building in the rear, or on the cliff, alone having windows that opened outward. This was as true of the roofs as of the perpendicular parts of the structure, the only exceptions being in the loops that had been cut in the half story beneath the eaves.

Of course the garrets were very extensive. They were occupied in part, however, by small rooms with dormer-windows, the latter of which opened on the court, with the exception of those above the cliff. It was on the roofs of these windows that Captain Willoughby had laid his platform or walk, with a view to extinguish fires or defend the place. There were many rooms also that were lighted only by the loops, and which, of course, were on the outer side of the buildings. In addition to these arrangements, the garret portions of the Hut were divided into two great parts, like the lower floor, without any doors of communication. Thus, below, the apartments commenced at the gateway, and extended along one-half the front; the whole of the east wing, and the whole of the rear, occupying five-eighths of the entire structure. This part contained all the rooms occupied by the family and the offices. The corresponding three-eighths, or the remaining half of the front, and the whole of the west wing, were given to visitors, and were now in possession of the people of the valley; as were all the rooms and garrets above them. On the other hand, Captain Willoughby, with a view to keep his family to itself, had excluded every one but the usual inmates from his own portion of the house, garret rooms included.

Some of the garret rooms, particularly those over the library, drawing-room, and parlor, were convenient and well-furnished little apartments, enjoying dormer windows that opened on the meadows and forest, and possessing a very tolerable elevation for rooms of that particular construction. Here Mr. Woods lodged and had his study. The access was by a convenient flight of steps, placed in the vestibule that communicated with the court. A private and narrower flight also ascended from the offices.

Maud now led the way up the principal stairs, Mike being on post at the outer door to keep off impertinent eyes, followed by Robert Willoughby. Unlike most American houses, the Hut had few passages on its principal floor; the rooms communicating *en suite*, as a better arrangement where the buildings were so long, and yet so narrow. Above, however, one side was left in open garret; sometimes in front and sometimes in the rear, as the light came from the court, or from without. Into this garret, then, Maud conducted the major, passing a line of humble rooms on her right, which belonged to the families of the Plinys and the Smashes, with their connections, until she reached the front range of the

buildings. Here the order was changed along the half of the structure reserved to the use of the family; the rooms being on the outer side lighted merely by the loops, while opposite to them was an open garret with windows that overlooked the court.

Passing into the garret just mentioned, Maud soon reached the door of the little room she sought. It was an apartment she had selected for painting, on account of the light from the loop, which in the morning was particularly favorable, though somewhat low. As she usually sat on a little stool, however, this difficulty was in some measure obviated; and, at all events, the place was made to answer her purposes. She kept the key herself, and the room, since Beulah's marriage in particular, was her sanctum; no one entering it unless conducted by its mistress. Occasionally, little Smash was admitted with a broom; though Maud, for reasons known to herself, often preferred sweeping the small carpet that covered the center of the floor with her own fair hands, in preference to suffering another to intrude.

The major was aware that Maud had used this room for the last seven years. It was here he had seen her handkerchief waving at the loop, when he last departed; and hundreds of times since had he thought of this act of watchful affection, with doubts that led equally to pain or pleasure, as images of merely sisterly care, or of a tenderer feeling, obtruded themselves. These loops were four feet long, cut in the usual beveling manner through the massive timbers; were glazed, and had thick bullet-proof, inside shutters, that in this room were divided into equal parts, in order to give Maud the proper use of the light she wanted. All these shutters were now closed by command of the captain, in order to conceal the lights that would be flickering through the different garrets; and so far had caution become a habit, that Maud seldom exposed her person at night, near the loop, with the shutter open.

On the present occasion, she left the light without, and threw open the upper half of the heavy shutter, remarking, as she did so, that the day was just beginning to dawn.

"In a few minutes it will be light," she added; "then we shall be able to see who is and who is not in the valley. Look—you can perceive my father near the gate, at this moment."

"I do, to my shame, Maud. He should not be there, while I am cooped up here, behind timbers that are almost shot-proof."

"It will be time for you to go to the front, as you soldiers call it, when there is an enemy to face. You cannot think there is any danger of an attack upon the Hut this morning."

"Certainly not. It is now too late. If intended at all, it would have been made before that streak of light appeared in the east."

"Then close the shutter, and I will bring in the lamp, and show you some of my sketches. We artists are thirsting always for praise; and I know you have a taste, Bob, that one might dread."

"This is kind of you, dear Maud," answered the major, closing the shutter; "for they tell me you are niggardly of bestowing such favors. I hear you have got to likenesses—little Evert's, in particular."

CHAPTER XVI.

"Anxious, she hovers o'er the web the while,
Reads, as it grows, thy figured story there;
Now she explains the texture with a smile,
And now the woof interprets with a tear."
—FAWCETT.

ALL Maud's feelings were healthful and natural. She had no exaggerated sentiments, and scarcely art enough to control or to conceal any of the ordinary impulses of her heart. We are not about to relate a scene, therefore, in which a long-cherished but hidden miniature of the young man is to play a conspicuous part, and to be the means of revealing to two lovers the state of their respective hearts; but one of a very different character. It is true, Maud had endeavored to make, from memory, one or two sketches of "Bob's"

face; but she had done it openly, and under the cognizance of the whole family. This she might very well do, indeed, in her usual character of a sister, and excite no comments. In these efforts, her father and mother, and Beulah, had uniformly pronounced her success to be far beyond their hopes; but Maud, herself, had thrown them all aside, half-finished, dissatisfied with her own labors. Like the author, whose fertile imagination fancies pictures that defy his powers of description, her pencil ever fell far short of the face that her memory kept so constantly in view. This sketch wanted animation, that gentleness, another fire, and a fourth candor; in short, had Maud begun a thousand, all would have been deficient, in her eyes, in some great essential of perfection. Still she had no secret about her efforts, and half a dozen of these very sketches lay uppermost in her portfolio, when she spread it and its contents before the eyes of the original.

Major Willoughby thought Maud had never appeared more beautiful than as she moved about making her little preparations for the exhibition. Pleasure heightened her color; and there was such a mixture of frank, sisterly regard, in every glance of her eye, blended, however, with sensitive feeling and conscious womanly reserve, as made her a thousand times—measuring amounts by the young man's sensations—more interesting than he had ever seen her. The lamp gave but an indifferent light for a gallery, but it was sufficient to betray Maud's smiles and blushes, and each varying emotion of her charming countenance.

"Now, Bob," she said, opening her portfolio, with all her youthful frankness and confidence, "you know well enough I am not one of those old masters of whom you used to talk so much, but your own pupil—the work of your own hands; and if you find more faults than you have expected, you will have the goodness to remember that the master has deserted his peaceful pursuits to go a-campaigning—there—that is a caricature of your own countenance staring you in the face, as a preface!"

"This is like, I should think—was it done from memory, dear Maud?"

"How else should it be done? All our entreaties have never been able to persuade you to send us even a miniature. You were wrong in this, Bob"—by no accident did Maud now ever call the major, Robert, though Beulah often did. There was a desperate sort of familiarity in the Bob that she could easily adopt; but the "Robert" had a family sound that she disliked; and yet a more truly feminine creature than Maud Meredith did not exist—"you are wrong, Bob; for mother actually pines to possess your picture, in some shape or other. It was this wish that induced me to attempt these things."

"And why has no one of them ever been finished? Here are six or eight beginnings, and all more or less like, I should think, and not one of them more than half done. Why have I been treated so cavalierly, Miss Maud?"

The fair artist's color deepened a little; but her smile was quite as sweet as it was saucy, as she replied—

"Girlish caprice, I suppose. I like neither of them; and of that which a woman dislikes, she will have none. To be candid, however, I hardly think there is one of them all that does you justice."

"No?—what fault have you to find with this? This might be worked up to something very natural."

"It would be a natural, then—it wants expression fearfully."

"And this, which is still better. That might be finished while I am here, and I will give you some sittings."

"Even mother dislikes that—there is too much of the Major of Foot in it. Mr. Woods says it is a martial picture."

"And ought not a soldier to look like a soldier? To me, now, that seems a capital beginning."

"It is not what mother, or Beulah—or father—or even any of us wants. It is too full of Bunker's Hill. Your friends desire to see you as you appear to them; not as you appear to your enemies."

"Upon my word, Maud, you have made great advances in the art! This is a view of the Knoll, and the dam—and here is

another of the mill, and the waterfall—all beautifully done, and in water-colórs too. What is this? Have you been attempting a sketch of yourself! The glass must have been closely consulted, my fair coquette, to enable you to do this!"

The blood had rushed into Maud's face, covering it with a rich tell-tale mantle, when her companion first alluded to the half-finished miniature held in his hand; then her features resembled ivory, as the revulsion of feeling that overcame her confusion followed. For some little time she sat in breathless stillness, with her looks cast upon the floor, conscious that Robert Willoughby was glancing from her own face to the miniature, and from the miniature to her face again, making his observations and comparisons. Then she ventured to raise her eyes timidly toward his, half-imploringly, as if to beseech him to proceed to something else. But the young man was too much engrossed with the exceedingly pretty sketch he held in his hand to understand her meaning or to comply with her wishes.

"This is yourself, Maud!" he cried—"though in a strange sort of dress—why have you spoilt so beautiful a thing by putting it in this masquerade?"

"It is not myself—it is a copy of—a miniature I possess."

"A miniature you possess! Of whom can you possess so lovely a miniature, and I never see it?"

A faint smile illumined the countenance of Maud, and the blood began to return to her cheeks. She stretched her hand over to the sketch and gazed on it with intense feeling, until the tears began to stream from her eyes.

"Maud—dear, dearest Maud—have I said that which pains you? I do not understand all this, but I confess there are secrets to which I can have no claim to be admitted—"

"Nay, Bob, this is making too much of what, after all, must sooner or later be spoken of openly among us. I believe that to be a copy of a miniature of my mother."

"Of mother, Maud—you are beside yourself—it has neither her features, expression, nor the color of her eyes. It is the picture of a far handsomer woman, though mother is still pretty; and it is perfection!"

"I mean of my mother—of Maud Yeardley; the wife of my father, Major Meredith."

This was said with a steadiness that surprised our heroine herself, when she came to think over all that had passed, and it brought the blood to her companion's heart in a torrent.

"This is strange!" exclaimed Willoughby, after a short pause. "And my mother—our mother has given you the original and told you this? I did not believe she could muster the resolution necessary to such an act."

"She has not. You know, Bob, I am now of age; and my father a month since put some papers into my hand, with a request that I would read them. They contain a marriage settlement and other things of that sort, which show I am mistress of more money than I should know what to do with if it were not for dear little Evert—but with such a precious being to love, one can never have too much of anything. With the papers were many trinkets, which I suppose father never looked at. This beautiful miniature was among the last; and I feel certain, from some remarks I ventured to make, mother does not know of its existence."

As Maud spoke, she drew the original from her bosom and placed it in Robert Willoughby's hands. When this simple act was performed her mind seemed relieved; and she waited with strong natural interest to hear Robert Willoughby's comments.

"This, then, Maud, was your own—your real mother!" the young man said, after studying the miniature with a thoughtful countenance for near a minute. "It is like her—like you."

"Like her, Bob? How can you know anything of that? I suppose it to be my mother because I think it like myself, and because it is not easy to say who else it can be. But you cannot know anything of this?"

"You are mistaken, Maud—I remember both your parents well—it could not be otherwise, as they were the bosom friends of my own. You will remember that I am now eight-and-twenty, and that I had seen seven of these years when you were born. Was my first effort in arms never spoken of in your presence?"

"Never—perhaps it was not a subject for me to hear, if it were in any manner connected with my parents."

"You are right—that must be the reason it has been kept from your ears."

"Surely, surely, I am old enough to hear it now—you will conceal nothing from me, Bob?"

"If I would, I could not now. It is too late, Maud. You know the manner in which Major Meredith died—?"

"He fell in battle, I have suspected," answered the daughter, in a suppressed, doubtful tone—"for no one has ever directly told me even that."

"He did, and I was at his side. The French and savages made an assault on us about an hour earlier than this, and our two fathers rushed to the pickets to repel it—I was a reckless boy, anxious even at that tender age to see a fray, and was at their side. Your father was one of the first that fell; but Joyce and our father beat the Indians back from his body, and saved it from mutilation. Your mother was buried in the same grave, and then you came to us, where you have been ever since."

Maud's tears flowed fast, and yet it was not so much in grief as in a gush of tenderness she could hardly explain to herself. Robert Willoughby understood her emotions, and perceived that he might proceed.

"I was old enough to remember both your parents well; I was a favorite, I believe, with, certainly was much petted by, both. I remember your birth, Maud, and was suffered to carry you in my arms ere you were a week old."

"Then you have known me for an impostor from the beginning, Bob—must have often thought fome as such!"

"I have known you for the daughter of Lewellen Meredith, certainly; and not for the world would I have you the real child of Hugh Willoughby—"

"Bob!" exclaimed Maud, her heart beating violently, a rush of feeling nearly overcoming her, in which alarm, consciousness, her own secret, dread of something wrong, and a confused glimpse of the truth, were all so blended, as nearly to deprive her, for the moment, of the use of her senses.

It is not easy to say precisely what would have followed this tolerably explicit insight into the state of the young man's feelings, had not an outcry on the lawn given the major notice that his presence was needed below. With a few words of encouragement to Maud, first taking the precaution to extinguish the lamp, lest its light should expose her to a shot in passing some of the open loops, he sprang toward the stairs, and was at his post again literally in a minute. Nor was he a moment too soon. The alarm was general, and it was understood an assault was momentarily expected.

The situation of Robert Willoughby was now tantalizing in the extreme. Ignorant of what was going on in front, he saw no enemy in the rear to oppose, and was condemned to inaction at a moment when he felt that, by training, years, affinity to the master of the place, and all the usual considerations, he ought to be in front opposed to the enemy. It is probable he would have forgotten his many cautions to keep close, had not Maud appeared in the library, and implored him to remain concealed, at least until there was the certainty his presence was necessary elsewhere.

At that instant every feeling but those connected with the danger was in a degree forgotten. Still, Willoughby had enough consideration for Maud to insist on her joining her mother and Beulah, in the portion of the building where the absence of external windows rendered their security complete so long as the foe could be kept without the palisades. In this he succeeded, but not until he had promised, again and again, to be cautious in not exposing himself at any of the windows, the day having now fairly dawned, and particularly

not to let it be known in the Hut that he was present, until it became indispensable.

The major felt relieved when Maud had left him. For her, he had no longer any immediate apprehensions, and he turned all his faculties to the sounds of the assault which he supposed to be going on in front. To his surprise, however, no discharges of firearms succeeded; and even the cries and orders, and calling from point to point, that are a little apt to succeed an alarm in an irregular garrison, had entirely ceased; and it became doubtful whether the whole commotion did not proceed from a false alarm. The Smashes, in particular, whose vociferations for the first few minutes had been of a very decided kind, were now mute; and the exclamations of the women and children had ceased.

Major Willoughby was too good a soldier to abandon his post without orders, though bitterly did he regret the facility with which he had consented to accept so inconsiderable a command. He so far disregarded his instructions, however, as to place his whole person before a window, in order to reconnoiter; for it was now broad daylight, though the sun had not yet risen. Nothing rewarded this careless exposure, and then it flashed upon his mind that, as the commander of a separate detachment, he had a perfect right to employ any of his immediate subordinates, either as messengers or scouts. His choice of an agent was somewhat limited, it is true, lying between Mike and the Plinies; after a moment of reflection, he determined to choose the former.

Mike was duly relieved from his station at the door, the younger Pliny being substituted for him, and he was led into the library. Here he received hasty but clear orders from the major how he was to proceed, and was thrust, rather than conducted from the room, in his superior's haste to hear the tidings. Three or four minutes might have elapsed, when an irregular volley of musketry was heard in front; then succeeded an answering discharge, which sounded smothered and distant. A single musket came from the garrison a minute later, and then Mike rushed into the library, his eyes dilated with a sort of wild delight, dragging rather than carrying his piece after him.

"The news!" exclaimed the major, as soon as he got a glimpse of his messenger. "What mean these volleys, and how comes on my father in front?"

"Is it what do they mane?" answered Mike. "Well, there is but one maning to powther and ball, and that's far more sarious than shilielah wo-r-r-k. If the rapscallions didn't fire a whole plathoon as Sergeant Joyce calls it, right at the Knoll, my name is not Michael O'Hearn, or my nature one that dales in givin' back as good as I get."

"But the volley came first from the house; why did my father order his people to make the first discharge?"

"For the same r'ason that he didn't. Och! there was a big frown on his f'atures when he heard the rifles and muskets; and Mr. Woods never pr'ached more to the purpose than the seargeant himself ag'in that same. But to think of them rapscallions answering a fire that was ag'in orders! Not a word did his honor say about shooting any of them, and they just pulled their triggers on the house all the same as if it had been logs growing in senseless and uninhabited trees, instead of a rational and well p'apled abode. Och! ar'nt they vagabonds!"

"If you do not wish to drive me mad, man, tell me clearly what has passed, that I may understand you."

"Is it understand that's wanting! Lord, yer honor, if ye can understand that Misther Sthrides, that's you, ye'll be a wise man. He calls hisself a 'son of the poor'atins,' and poor 'ating it must have been in the counthry of his faders, to have produced so lame and skinny a baste as that same. The orders was as partic'lar as tongue of man could utter, and what good will it all do? Ye'er not to fire, says Sergeant Joyce, till ye all hear the wor-r-d and the divil of a wor-r-d did they wait for; but blaze away did they, jist beca'ase a knot of savages come on to them rocks ag'in, where they had possession all yesterday afthernoon; and sure

it is common enough to breakfast where a man sups."

"You mean to say that the Indians have reappeared on the rocks, and that some of Strides' men fired at them without orders? Is that the history of the affair?"

"It's jist that, majjor; and little good, or little har-r-m, did it do. Joel, and his poor'atins, blazed away at 'em, as if they had been so many Christians; and 'twould have done yer heart good to have heard the sergeant belabor them with hard wor-r-ds for their throuble. There's none of the poor'atin family in the sergeant, who's a mighty man wid his tongue!"

"And the savages returned the volley —which explains the distant discharge I heard."

"Anybody can see majjor, that ye're yer father's son, and a soldier bor-r-n. Och! who would of t'ought of that, but one bred and bor-r-n in the army? Yes; the savages sent back as good as they got, which was jist not'in' at all, seein' that no one is har-r-m'd."

"And the single piece that followed— there was one discharge by itself?"

Mike opened his mouth with a grin that might have put either of the Plinies to shame, it being rather a favorite theory with the descendants of the Puritans—or "poor'atins," as the County Leitrim-man called Joel and his set—that the Irishman was more than a match for any son of Ham at the Knoll, in the way of capacity about this portion of the human countenance. The major saw that there was a good deal of self-felicitation in the expression of Mike's visage, and he demanded an explanation in more direct terms.

"'Twas I did it, majjor, and 'twas as well fired a piece as ye've ever hear-r-d in the King's sarvice. Divil bur-r-n me, if I lets Joel get any such advantage over me, as to have a whole battie to himself. No —no—as soon as I felt his Yankee powther, and could get my own musket cocked, and pointed out of the forthifications, I lets 'em have it, as if it had been so much breakfast ready cooked to their hands. 'Twas well pointed, too; for I'm not the man to shoot into a fri'nd's countenance."

"And you broke the orders for a reason no better than the fact that Strides had broken them before?"

"Divil a bit, majjor—Joel had broken the orders, ye see, and that settled the matter. The thing that is once broken is broken, and wor-r-ds can't mend it, any more than forbearin' to fire a gun will mend it."

By dint of cross-questioning Robert Willoughby finally succeeded in getting something like an outline of the truth from Mike. The simple facts were, that the Indians had taken possession of their old bivouac, as soon as the day dawned, and had commenced their preparations for breakfast, when Joel, the miller, and a few of that set, in a paroxysm of valor, had discharged a harmless volley at them, the distance rendering the attempt futile. This fire had been partially returned, the whole concluding with the finale from the Irishman's gun, as has been related. As it was now too light to apprehend a surprise, and the ground in front of the palisade had no very dangerous covers, Robert Willoughby was emboldened to send one of the Plinies to request an interview with his father. In a few minutes the latter appeared, accompanied by Mr. Woods.

"The same party has reappeared, and seems disposed to occupy its old position near the mill," said the captain, in answer to his son's inquiries. "It is difficult to say what the fellows have in view; and there are moments when I think there are more or less whites among them. I suggested as much to Strides, chaplain; and I thought the fellow appeared to receive the notion as if he thought it might be true."

"Joel is a little of an enigma to me, Captain Willoughby," returned the chaplain; "sometimes seizing an idea like a cat pouncing upon a rat, and then coquetting with it, as the same cat will play with a mouse, when it has no appetite for food."

"Och! he's precious poor 'atin!" growled Mike, from his corner of the room.

"If whites are among the savages, why should they not make themselves known?"

demanded Robert Willoughby. "Your character, sir, is no secret; and they must be acquainted with their own errand here."

"I will send for Strides, and get his opinion a little more freely," answered the captain, after a moment of deliberation. "You will withdraw, Bob; though by leaving your door a little ajar the conversation will reach you, and prevent the necessity of a repetition."

As Robert Willoughby was not unwilling to hear what the overseer might have to say in the present state of things, he did not hesitate about complying, withdrawing into his own room, as requested, and leaving the door ajar in a way to prevent suspicion of his presence as far as possible. But Joel Strides, like all bad men, ever suspected the worst. The innocent and pure of mind are alone without distrust; while one constituted morally like the overseer, never permitted his thoughts to remain in the tranquillity that is a fruit of confidence. Conscious of his own evil intentions, his very nature put on armor against the same species of machinations in others, as the hedgehog rolls himself in a ball, and thrusts out his quills at the sight of the dog. Had not Captain Willoughby been one of those who are slow to see evil, he might have detected something wrong in Joel's feelings, by the very first glance he cast about him, on entering the library.

In point of fact, Strides' thoughts had not been idle since the rencontre of the previous night. Inquisitive, and under none of the usual restraints of delicacy, he had already probed all he dare approach on the subject; and by this time had become perfectly assured that there was some mystery about the unknown individual whom he had met in his master's company. To own the truth, Joel did not suspect that Major Willoughby had again ventured so far into the lion's den; but he fancied that some secret agent of the crown was at the Hut, and that the circumstance offered a fair opening for helping the captain down the ladder of public favor, and to push himself up a few of its rounds. He was not sorry, therefore, to be summoned to this conference, hoping it might lead to some opening for further discoveries.

"Sit down, Strides," said Captain Willoughby, by motioning toward a chair, so distant from the open door of the bedroom, and so placed as to remove the danger of too close a proximity. "Sit down—I wish to consult you about the state of things toward the mills. To me it seems as if there were more pale-faces than red-skins among our visitors."

"That's not onlikely, captain; the people has got to be greatly given to paintin' and imitatin' sin' the hatchet has been dug up ag'in the British. The tea-boys were all in Indian fashion."

"True; but why should white men assume such a disguise to come to the Knoll? I am not conscious of having an enemy on earth who could meditate harm to me or mine."

Alas! poor captain. That a man at sixty should yet have to learn that the honest, and fair dealing, and plain dealing, and affluent—for Captain Willoughby was affluent in the eyes of those around him—that such a man should imagine he was without enemies, was to infer that the Spirit of Darkness had ceased to exercise his functions among men. Joel knew better, though he did not perceive any necessity, just then, for letting the fact reach the ears of the party principally concerned.

"A body might s'pose the captain was pop'lar, if any man is pop'lar," answered the overseer; "nor do I know that visitors in paint betoken onpopularity to a person in these times more than another. May I ask why the captain consaits these Injins a'n't Injins? To me they have a desperate savage look, though I a'n't much accustomed to redskin usages."

"Their movements are too open, and yet too uncertain, for warriors of the tribes. I think a savage, by this time, would have made up his mind to act as friend or foe."

Joel seemed struck with the idea; and the expression of his countenance, which on entering had been wily, distrustful, and prying, suddenly changed to that of deep reflection.

"Has the captain seen anything else, partic'lar, to confirm this idea?" he asked.

"Their encampment, careless manner of moving, and unguarded exposure of their persons, are all against their being Indians."

"The messenger they sent across the meadow yesterday seemed to me to be a Mohawk."

"He was. Of his being a real redskin there can be no question. But he could neither speak nor understand English. The little that passed between us was in Low Dutch. Our dialogue was short; for, apprehensive of treachery, I brought it to a close sooner than I might otherwise have done."

"Yes; treachery is a cruel thing," observed the conscientious Joel; "a man can't be too strongly on his guard ag'in it. Does the captain ra'ally calcilate on defending the house, should a serious attempt be brought forward for the day?"

"Do I? That is an extraordinary question, Mr. Strides. Why have I built in this mode if I have no such intention?—why palisaded?—why armed and garrisoned, if not in earnest?"

"I s'posed all this might have been done to prevent a surprise, but not in any hope of standin' a siege. I should be sorry to see all our women and children shut up under one roof, if the inimy came ag'in us, in airnest, with fire and sword."

"And I should be sorry to see them anywhere else. But this is losing time. My object in sending for you, Joel, was to learn your opinion about the true character of our visitors. Have you any opinion or information to give me on that point?"

Joel placed his elbow on his knee, and his chin in the palm of his hand, and pondered on what had been suggested, with seeming good-will and great earnestness.

"If any one could be found venturesome enough to go out with a flag," he at length remarked, "the whole truth might be come at in a few minutes."

"And whom shall I employ? Cheerfully would I go myself, were such a step military, or at all excusable in one in my situation."

"If the likes of myself will sarve your honor's turn," put in Mike, promptly, and yet with sufficient diffidence as regarded his views of his own qualifications—"there'll be nobody to gainsay that same; and it isn't wilcome that I nade tell you, ye'll be to use me as ye would yer own property."

"I hardly think Mike would answer," observed Joel, not altogether without a sneer. "He scurce knows an Indian from a white man; when it comes to the paint it would throw him into a dreadful confusion."

"If ye thinks that I am to be made to believe in any more Ould Nicks, Misther Shtrides, then ye're making a mistake in my nature. Let but the captain say the word, and I'll go to the mill and bring in a grist of them same, or l'ave my own body for toll."

"I do not doubt you in the least, Mike," Captain Willoughby mildly observed; "but there will be no occasion, just now, of your running any such risks. I shall be able to find other truce-bearers."

"It seems the captain has his man in view," Joel said, keenly eyeing his master. "Perhaps 'tis the same I saw out with him last night. That's a reliable person, I do s'pose."

"You have hit the nail on the head. It was the man who was out last night, at the same time I was out myself, and his name is Joel Strides."

"The captain's a little musical this morning. Waal, if go I must, as there was two on us out, let us go to these savages together. I saw enough of that man to know he is reliable, and if he'll go, I'll go."

"Agreed," said Robert Willoughby, stepping into the library, "I take you at your word, Mr. Strides. You and I will run what risks there may be, in order to relieve this family from its present alarming state."

The captain was astounded, though he knew not whether to be displeased or to rejoice. As for Mike, his countenance

expressed great dissatisfaction; for he ever fancied things were going wrong so long as Joel obtained his wishes. Strides, himself, threw a keen glance at the stranger, recognized him at once, and had sufficient self-command to conceal his discovery, though taken completely by surprise. The presence of the major, however, immediately removed all his objections to the proposed expedition; since, should the party prove friendly to the Americans, he would be safe on his own account; or, should it prove the reverse, a king's officer could not fail to be of sufficient protection.

"The gentleman's a total stranger to me," Joel hypocritically resumed; "but as the captain has belief in him, I must have the same. I am ready to do the ar'n'd, therefore, as soon as it is agreeable."

"This is well, Captain Willoughby," put in the major, in order to anticipate any objections from his father; "and the sooner a thing of this sort is done, the better it will be for all concerned. I am ready to proceed this instant, and I take it this worthy man—I think you call him Strides—is quite as willing."

Joel signified his assent, and the captain, perceiving no means of retreat, was fain to yield. He took the major into the bedroom, however, and held a minute's private discourse, when he returned, and bade the two go forth together.

"Your companion has his instructions, Joel," the captain observed, as they left the library together, "and you will follow his advice. Show the white flag as soon as you quit the gate. If they are true warriors, it must be respected."

Robert Willoughby was too intent on business, and too fearful of the reappearance and reproachful looks of Maud, to delay. He had passed the court, and was at the outer gate, before any of the garrison even noticed his appearance among them. Here, indeed, the father's heart felt a pang; and, but for his military pride, the captain would gladly have recalled his consent. It was too late, however; and, squeezing his hand, he suffered his son to pass outward. Joel followed steadily, as to appearance, though not without misgivings, as to what might be the consequences to himself and his growing family.

CHAPTER XVII.

"I worship not the sun at noon,
The wandering stars, the changing moon,
The wind, the flood, the flame;
I will not bow the votive knee
To wisdom, virtue, liberty;
There is no god, but God for me,
Jehovah is his name."—MONTGOMERY.

So sudden and unexpected had been the passage of Robert Willoughby through the court, and among the men on post without the inner gates, that no one recognized his person. A few saw that a stranger was in their midst; but, under his disguise, no one was quick enough of eye and thought to ascertain who that stranger was. The little white flag that they displayed denoted the errand of the messenger; the rest was left to conjecture.

As soon as Captain Willoughby ascertained that the alarm of the morning was not likely to lead to any immediate results, he had dismissed all the men, with the exceptien of a small guard that was stationed near the outer gate, under the immediate orders of Sergeant Joyce. The latter was one of those soldiers who view the details of the profession as forming its great essentials; and when he saw his commander about to direct a *sortie*, it formed his pride not to ask questions, and to seem to know nothing about it. To this, Jamie Allen, who composed one of the guard, quickly assented; but it was a great privation to the three or four New Englandmen to be commanded not to inquire into the why and wherefore.

"Wait for orders, men—wait for orders," observed the sergeant, by way of quieting an impatience that was very apparent. "If his honor the captain wished us so be acquainted with his movements, he would direct a general parade, and lay the matter before us, as you know he always does on proper occasion. 'Tis a flag going out, as you can see, and should a truce follow, we'll lay aside our muskets and seize the plowshares; should it be a

capitulation—I know our brave old commander too well to suppose it possible—but should it be even that, we'll ground arms like men, and make the best of it."

"And should Joel and the other man, who is a stranger to me, be scalped?" demanded one of the party.

"Then we'll avenge their scalps. That was the way with us when my Lord Howe fell. 'Avenge his death!' cried our colonel, and on we pushed, until near two thousand of us fell before the Frenchmen's trenches. Oh! that was a sight worth seeing, and a day to talk of!"

"Yes but you were threshed soundly, sergeant, as I've heard from many that were there."

"What of that, sir! We obeyed orders. 'Avenge his death!' was the cry; and on we pushed, in obedience, until there were not men enough left in our battalion to carry the wounded to the rear."

"And what did you do with them?" asked a youth who regarded the sergeant as another Cæsar—Napoleon not having come into notice in 1776.

"We let them lie where they fell. Young man, war teaches us all the wholesome lesson that impossibilities are impossible to be done. War is the great schoolmaster of the human race, and a learned man is he who has made nineteen or twenty campaigns."

"If he live to turn his lessons to account," remarked the first speaker with a sneer.

"If a man is to die in battle, sir, he had better die with his mind stored with knowledge than be shot like a dog that has outlived his usefulness. Every pitched battle carries out of the world learning upon learning that has been got in the field. Here comes his honor, who will confirm all I tell you, men. I was letting these men, sir, understand that the army and the field are the best schools on earth. Every old soldier will stick to that, your honor."

"We are apt to think so, Joyce. Have the arms been inspected this morning?"

"As soon as it was light. I did that myself, sir."

"Flints, cartridges-boxes, and bayonets, I hope?"

"Each and all, sir. Does your honor remember the morning we had the affair near Fort du Quesne?"

"You mean Braddock's defeat, I suppose, Joyce?"

"I call nothing a defeat, Captain Willoughby. We were roughly handled that day, sir; but I am not satisfied it was a defeat. It is true, we fell back, and lost some arms and stores; but, in the main, we stuck to our colors, considering it was in the woods. No, sir; I do not call that a defeat, by any means."

"You will at least own we were hard pressed, and might have fared worse than we did, had it not been for a certain colonial corps that manfully withstood the savages?"

"Yes, sir; that I allow. I remember the corps, and its commander, a Colonel Washington, with your honor's permission."

"It was, indeed, Joyce. And do you happen to know what has become of this same Colonel Washington?"

"It never crossed my mind to inquire, sir, as he was a provincial. I daresay he may have a regiment, or even a brigade by this time; and good use would he make of either."

"You have fallen far beyond his fortunes, Joyce. The man is a commander-in-chief—a captain-general."

"Your honor is jesting—since many of his seniors are still living."

"This is the man who leads the American armies, in the war with England."

"Well, sir, in that way, he may indeed get a quick step or two. I make no doubt, sir, so good a soldier will know how to obey orders."

"From which I infer you think him right, in the cause he has espoused?"

"Bless your honor, sir, I think nothing about it, and care nothing about it. If the gentleman has taken service with Congress, as they call the new headquarters, why he ought to obey Congress; and if he serve the King, his Majesty's orders should be attended to."

"And in this crisis, sergeant, may I ask

in what particular service you conceive yourself to be, just at the present moment."

"Captain Willoughby's, late of his Majesty's ——th Regiment of Foot, at your honor's command."

"If all act in the same spirit, Joyce, we shall do well enough at the Knoll, though twice as many savages brave us as are to be seen on yon rocks," returned the captain, smiling.

"And why should they no?" demanded Jamie Allen, earnestly. "Ye're laird here, and we've no the time nor the grace to study and understand the orthodoxy and heterodoxy of the quarrel between the House of Hanover and the houses of these Americans; so, while we 'a stand up for the house and household of our old master the Lord will smile on our efforts and lead us to victory."

"Divil bu-r-n me, now Jamie," said Mike, who having seen the major to the gate, now followed his father, in readiness to do him any good turn that might offer —"divil bu-r-n me, now Jamie, if ye could have said it better had ye just aised yer conscience to a proper praist, and were talking on a clean breast! Stick up for the captain, says I, and the Lord will be on our side!"

The sergeant nodded approbation of this sentiment, and the younger Pliny, who happened also to be within hearing, uttered the sententious word "gosh," and clenched his fist, which was taken as proof of assent also, on his part. But the Americans of the guard, all of whom were the tools of Joel's and the miller's arts, manifested a coldness that even exceeded the usual cold manner of their class. These men meant right; but they had been deluded by the falsehoods, machinations, and frauds of a demagogue, and were no longer masters of their own opinions and acts. It struck the captain that something was wrong; but, a foreigner by birth himself, he had only observed, and long known, the peculiar exterior and phlegm of the people of the country, which so nearly resemble the stoicism of the aborigines, as to induce many writers to attribute both alike to a cause connected with climate. The present was not a moment, however, nor was the impression strong enough to induce the master of the place to enter into any inquiries. Turning his eyes in the direction of the two bearers of the flag, he there beheld matter for new interest, completely diverting his thoughts from what had just passed.

"I see they have sent two men to meet our messengers, sergeant," he said. "This looks as if they understood the laws of war."

"Quite true, your honor. They should now blindfold our party, and lead them within their own works, before they suffer them to see at all; though there would be no great advantage in it, as Strides is as well acquainted with every inch of that rock as I am with the manual exercise."

"Which would seem to supersede the necessity of the ceremony you have mentioned."

"One never knows, your honor. Blindfolding is according to the rules, and I should blindfold a flag before I let him approach, though the hostile ranks stood drawn up one on each side of the parade-ground. Much is gained, while nothing is ever lost, by sticking to the rules of a trade."

The captain smiled, as did all the Americans of the guard, the last having too much sagacity not to perceive that a thing might be overdone, as well as too little attended to. As for Jamie and Mike, they both received the sergeant's opinions as law; the one from having tried the troops of the line at Culloden, and the other on account of divers experiences through which he had gone, and sundry fairs in his own green island. By this time, however, all were too curious in watching the result of the meeting to continue the discourse.

Robert Willoughby and Joel had moved along the lane, toward the rocks, without hesitating, keeping their little flag flying. It did not appear that their approach produced any change among the savages, who were now preparing their breakfast, until they had got within two hundred yards of the encampment, when two of the red men, having first laid aside

their arms, advanced to meet their visitors. This was the interview which attracted the attention of those at the Hut, and its progress was noted with the deepest interest.

The meeting appeared to be friendly. After a short conference, in which signs seemed to be a material agent in the communications, the four moved on in company, walking deliberately toward the rocks. Captain Willoughby had sent for his field-glass, and could easily perceive much that occurred in the camp, on the arrival of his son. The major's movements were calm and steady, and a feeling of pride passed over the father's heart as he noted this, amid a scene that was well adapted to disturb the equilibrium of the firmest mind. Joel certainly betrayed nervousness, though he kept close at his companion's side, and together they proceeded into the very center of the party of strangers.

The captain observed, also, that this arrival caused no visible sensation among the red men. Even those the major almost touched in passing did not look up to note his appearance, while no one seemed to speak or in any manner to heed him. The cooking and other preparations for the breakfast proceeded precisely as if no one had entered the camp. The two who had gone forth to meet the flag alone attended its bearers, whom they led through the center of the entire party; stopping only on the side opposite to the Hut, where there was an open space of flat rock, which it had not suited the savages to occupy.

Here the four halted, the major turning and looking back like a soldier who was examining his ground. Nor did any one appear disposed to interrupt him in an employment that Sergeant Joyce pronounced to be both bold and against the usages of war to permit. The captain thought the stoicism of the savages amounted to exaggeration, and it renewed his distrust of the real character of his visitors. In a minute or two, however, some three or four of the red men were seen consulting together apart, after which they approached the bearers of the flag, and some communications passed between the two sides. The nature of these communications could not be known, of course, though the conference appeared to be amicable. After two or three minutes of conversation, Robert Willoughby, Strides, the two men who had advanced to meet them, and the four chiefs who had joined the group, left the summit of the rock in company, taking a footpath that descended in the direction of the mills. In a short time they all disappeared in a body.

The distance was not so great but these movements could easily be seen by the naked eye, though the glass was necessary to discover some of the details. Captain Willoughby had planted the instrument among the palisades, and he kept his gaze riveted on the retiring group as long as it was visible; then, indeed, he looked at his companions, as if to read their opinions in their countenances. Joyce understood the expression of his face; and, saluting in the usual military manner, he presumed to speak, in the way of reply.

"It seems all right, your honor, the bandage excepted," said the sergeant. "The flag has been met at the outposts, and led into the camp. There the officer of the day, or some savage who does the duty, has heard his errand; and, no doubt, they have all now gone to headquarters to report."

"I desired my son, Joyce—"

"Whom, your honor?"

The general movement told the captain how completely his auditors were taken by surprise at this unlooked-for announcement of the presence of the major at the Knoll. It was too late to recall the words, however; and there was so little prospect of Robert's escaping the penetration of Joel, the father saw no use in attempting further concealment.

"I say I desired my son, Major Willoughby, who is the bearer of that flag," the captain steadily resumed, "to raise his hat in a particular manner, if all seemed right; or to make a certain gesture with his left arm, did he see anything that required us to be more than usually on our guard."

"And which notice has he given to the garrison, if it be your honor's pleasure to let us know?"

"Neither. I thought he manifested an intention to make the signal with the hat, when the chiefs first joined him; but he hesitated, and lowered his hand without doing as I had expected. Then, again, just as he disappeared behind the rocks, the left arm was in motion, though not in a way to complete the signal."

"Did he seem hurried, your honor, as if prevented from communicating by the enemy?"

"Not at all, Joyce. Irresolution appeared to be at the bottom of it, so far as I could judge."

"Pardon me, your honor; uncertainty would be a better word, as applied to so good a soldier. Has Major Willoughby quitted the King's service, that he is among us, sir, just at this moment?"

"I will tell you his errand another time, sergeant. At present, I can think only of the risk he runs. These Indians are lawless wretches; one is never sure of their faith."

"They are bad enough, sir; but no man can well be so bad as to disregard the rights of a flag," answered the sergeant, in a grave and slightly important manner. "Even the French, your honor, have always respected our flags."

"That is true; and yet I wish we could overlook that position at the mill. It's a great advantage to them, Joyce, that they can place themselves behind such a cover when they choose."

The sergeant looked at the encampment a moment; then his eye followed the woods, and the mountain sides, that skirted the little plain, until his back was fairly turned upon the supposed enemy, and he faced the forest in the rear of the Hut.

"If it be agreeable to your honor, a detachment can be detailed to make a demonstration"—Joyce did not exactly understand this word, but it sounded military—"in the following manner; I can lead out the party by the rear of the house, using the brook as a covered way. Once in the woods, it will be easy enough to make a flank movement upon the enemy's position; after which, the detachment can be guided by circumstances."

This was very martial in sound, and the captain felt well assured that Joyce was the man to attempt carrying out his own plan; but he made no answer, sighing and shaking his head, as he walked away toward the house. The chaplain followed, leaving the rest to observe the savages.

"Ye're proposition, sergeant, no seems to give his honor much satisfaction," said the mason, as soon as his superior was out of hearing. "Still, it was military, as I know by what I saw mysel' in the Forty-five. Flanking, and surprising and obsairving, and demonstrating, and such devices, are the soul of war, and are a' on the great highway to victory. Had Charlie's men obsairved, and particularized mair, there might have been a different family on the throne, an' the prince wad ha' got his ain ag'in. I like your idea much, serjaint, and gin ye gang oot to practice it, I trust ye'll no forget that ye've an an auld fri'nd here, willing to be of the pairty."

"I didn't think the captain much relished the notion of being questioned about his son's feelin's and visit up here, at a time like this," put in one of the Americans.

"There's bowels in the man's body!" cried Mike, "and it isn't the likes of him that has no failin'. Ye don't know what it is to be a father, or ye'd groan in spirit to see a child of yer own in the grip of fiery divils like them same. Isn't he a pratty man, and wouldn't I be sorrowful to hear that he had come to har-r-m? Ye've niver asked, sergeant, how the major got into the house, and ye a military sentry in the bargain!"

"I suppose he came by command, Michael, and it is not the duty of the non-commissioned officers to question their superiors about anything that has happened out of the common way. I take things as I find them, and obey orders. I only hope that the son, as a field officer, will not outrank the father, which would be unbecoming; though date of commissions, and superiority must be respected."

"I rather think if a major in the King's

service was to undertake to use authority here," said the spokesman of the Americans, a little stiffly, "he would not find many disposed to follow at his heels."

"Mutiny would not fare well, did it dare to lift its head in this garrison," answered the sergeant, with a dignity that might better have suited the mess room of a regular regiment, than the situation in which he was actually placed. "Both Captain Willoughby and myself have seen mutiny attempted, but neither has ever seen it succeed."

"Do you look on us as lawful enlisted soldiers?" demanded one of the laborers, who had a sufficient smattering of the law to understand the difference between a mercenary and a volunteer. "If I'm regimented, I should at least like to know in whose service it is?"

"Ye're over-quick at yer objections and sentiments," said Jamie Allen, coolly, "like most youths, who see only their ain experience in the airth, and the providence o' the Lord. Enlisted we are, a' of us, even to Michael, here, and it's in the service of our good master, his honor Captain Willoughby, whom, with his kith and kin, may the Lord presairve from this and all other dangers."

The word master would, of itself, be very likely to create a revolt to-day, in such a corps as it was the fortune of our captain to command, though to that of "boss" there would not be raised the slightest objection. But the English language had not undergone half of its present mutations in the year 1776; and no one winced in admitting that he served a "master," though the gorges of several rose at the idea of being engaged in the service of any one, considered in a military point of view. It is likely the suggestion of the mason would have led to a hot discussion, had not a stir among the savages, just at that instant, called off the attention of all present, to matters of more importance than even an angry argument.

The movement seemed to be general, and Joyce ordered his men to stand to their arms. Still he hesitated about giving the alarm. Instead of advancing toward the Hut, however, the Indians raised a general yell, and went over the cliffs, disappearing in the direction of the mill, like a flock of birds taking wing together. After waiting half an hour in vain, to ascertain if any signs of the return of the Indians were to be seen, the sergeant went himself to report the state of things to his commander.

Captain Willoughby had withdrawn to make his toilet for the day, when he saw the last of his son and the overseer. While thus employed, he had communicated to his wife all that had occurred, and Mrs. Willoughby, in her turn, had told the same to her daughter. Maud was much the most distressed, her suspicions of Joel being by far the most active and the most serious. From the instant she learned what had passed, she began to anticipate grave consequences to Robert Willoughby, though she had sufficient fortitude, and sufficient consideration for others, to keep most of her apprehensions to herself.

When Joyce demanded his audience, the family was at breakfast, though little was eaten, and less was said. The sergeant was admitted, and he told his story with military precision.

"This has a suspicious air, Joyce," observed the captain, after musing a little; "to me it seems like an attempt to induce us to follow and to draw us into an ambuscade."

"It may be that, your honor; or it may be a good honest retreat. Two prisoners is a considerable exploit for savages to achieve. I have known them to count one a victory."

"Be not uneasy, Wilhelmina; Bob's rank will secure him good treatment, his exchange being far more important to his captors, if captors they be, than his death. It is too soon to decide on such a point, sergeant. After all, the Indians may be at the mills in council. On a war-path, all the young men are usually consulted before any important step is taken. Then, it may be the wish of the chiefs to impress our flag-bearers with an idea of their force."

"All that is military, your honor, and quite possible. Still, to me the movement

seems as if a retreat was intended, in fact, or that the appearance of one was in view."

"I will soon know the truth," cried the chaplain. "I, a man of peace, can surely go forth and ascertain who these people are, and what is their object."

"You, Woods! My dear fellow, do you imagine a tribe of bloodthirsty savages will respect you or your sacred office? You have a sufficient task with the King's forces, letting his enemies alone. You are no missionary to still a war-cry."

"I beg pardon, sir," put in the sergeant —"his reverence is more than half right," —here the chaplain rose, and quitted the room in haste, unobserved by the two colloquists—"there is scarce a tribe in the colony, your honor, that has not some knowledge of our priesthood; and I know of no instance in which the savages have ever ill-treated a divine."

"Pooh, pooh, Joyce; this is much too sentimental for your Mohawks, and Oneidas, and Onondagas, and Tuscaroras. They will care no more for little Woods than they care for the great woods through which they journey on their infernal errands."

"One cannot know, Hugh"—observed the anxious mother. "Our dear Robert is in their hands; and should Mr. Woods be really disposed to go on this mission of mercy, does it comport with our duty as parents to oppose it?"

"A mother is all mother," murmured the captain, who rose from the table, kissed his wife's cheek affectionately, and left the room, beckoning to the sergeant to follow.

Captain Willoughby had not been gone many minutes, when the chaplain made his appearance, attired in his surplice, and wearing his best wig; an appliance that all elderly gentlemen in that day fancied necessary to the dignity and gravity of their appearance. Mrs. Willoughby, to own the truth, was delighted. If this excellent woman was ever unjust, it was in behalf of her children; solicitude for whom sometimes induced her to overlook the rigid construction of the laws of equality.

"We will see which best understands the influence of the sacred office, Captain Willoughby or myself," observed the chaplain, with a little more importance of manner than it was usual for one so simple to assume. "I do not believe the ministry was instituted to be browbeaten by tribes of savages, any more than it is to be silenced by the unbeliever or schismatic."

It was very evident that the Rev. Mr. Woods was considerably excited; and this was a condition of mind so unusual with him as to create a species of awe in the observers. As for the two young women, deeply as they were interested in the result, and keenly as Maud, in particular, felt everything which touched the fortunes of Robert Willoughby, neither would presume to interfere, when they saw one whom they had been taught to reverence, from childhood, acting in a way that so little conformed to his ordinary manner. As for Mrs. Willoughby, her own feelings were so much awakened that never had Mr. Woods seemed so evangelical and like a saint as at that very moment; and it would not have been difficult to persuade her that he was acting under something very like righteous superhuman impulses.

Such, however, was far from being the case. The worthy priest had an exalted idea of his office; and, to fancy it might favorably impress even savages, was little more than carrying out his everyday notions of its authority. He conscientiously believed that he himself, a regularly ordained presbyter, would be more likely to succeed in the undertaking before him, than a mere deacon; were a bishop present, he would cheerfully have submitted to his superior claims to sanctity and success. As for archbishops, archdeacons, deans, rural deans, and all the other worldly machinery which has been superadded to the Church, the truth compels us to add, that our divine felt no especial reverence, since he considered them as so much clerical surplusage, of very questionable authority, and of doubtful use. He adhered strictly to the orders of divine institution; to these he attached so much weight, as to be entirely willing, in his own person,

to demonstrate how little was to be apprehended, when their power was put forth, even against Indians, in humility and faith.

"I shall take this sprig of laurel in my hand, in lieu of the olive-branch," said the excited chaplain, "as the symbol of peace. It is not probable that savages can tell one plant from the other; and if they could, it will be easy to explain that olives do not grow in America. It is an eastern tree, ladies, and furnishes the pleasant oil we use on our salads. I carry with me, notwithstanding, the oil which proves a balm to many sorrows; that will be sufficient."

"You will bid them let Robert return to us without delay?" said Mrs. Willoughby, earnestly.

"I shall bid them respect God and their consciences. I cannot now stop to rehearse to you the mode of proceeding I shall adopt; but it is all arranged in my own mind. It will be necessary to call the Deity the 'Great Spirit' or 'Manitou'—and to use many poetical images; but this can I do, on an emergency. Extempore preaching is far from agreeable to me, in general; nor do I look upon it, in this age of the world, as exactly canonical; nevertheless, it shall be seen I know how to submit even to that, when there is a suitable necessity."

It was so seldom Mr. Woods used such magnificent ideas, or assumed a manner in the least distinguishable from one of the utmost simplicity, that his listeners now felt really awed; and when he turned to bless them, as he did with solemnity and affection, the two daughters knelt to receive his benedictions. These delivered, he walked out of the room, crossed the court, and proceeded straightway to the outer gate.

It was, perhaps, fortunate to the design of the Rev. Mr. Woods, that neither the captain nor the sergeant was in the way to arrest it. This, the former would certainly have done out of regard to his friend, and the last out of regard to "orders." But these military personages were in the library, in deep consultation concerning the next step necessary to take. This left the coast clear, no one belonging to the guard conceiving himself of sufficient authority to stop the chaplain, more especially when he appeared in his wig and surplice. Jamie Allen was a corporal, by courtesy; and, at the first summons, he caused the outer gate to be unlocked and unbarred, permitting the chaplain to make his egress, attended by his own respectful bows. This Jamie did out of reverence to religion generally, though the surplice ever excited his disgust; and, as for the Liturgy, he deemed it to be a species of solemn mockery of worship.

The captain did not reappear outside of the court until the chaplain, who had made the best of his way toward the rocks, was actually stalking like a ghost among ruins, through the deserted shanties of the late encampment.

"What in the name of Indian artifice is the white animal that I see moving about on the rocks," demanded the captain, whose look was first turned in the direction of the camp.

"It seems an Indian wrapped up in a shirt, your honor—as I live, sir, it has a cocked hat on its head!"

"Na—na"—interrupted Jamie, "ye'll no be guessing the truth this time, without the aid of a little profane revelation. The chiel ye see yan, yer honor, is just Chaplain Woods."

"Woods—the devil!"

"Na—na—yer honor, it's the reverend gentleman hissel' and no the de'il at a'. He's in his white frock—though why he didn't wear his black garment is more than I can tell ye—but there he is, walking about amang the Indian dwellings, all the same as if they were so many pews of his ain kirk."

"And how came you to let him pass the gate against orders?"

"Well, and it is aboot the orders of the priesthood, that he so often preaches, and seeing him in the white gairment, and knowing ye've so many fast-days, and Christmas', in the kirk o' England, I fancied it might be a bit matter o' prayer he wished to offer up yan, in the house on the flat; and so I e'en thought church prayers better than no prayers at all, in such a strait."

As it was useless to complain, the captain was fain to submit, even beginning to hope some good might come of the adventure, when he saw Mr. Woods walking unmolested through the deserted camp. The glass was leveled, and the result was watched in intense interest.

The chaplain first explored every shanty, fearlessly and with diligence. Then he descended the rocks and was lost to view, like those who had preceded him. A feverish hour passed, without any symptom of human life appearing in the direction of the mills. Sometimes those who watched, fancied they beheld a smoke beginning to steal up over the brow of the rocks, the precursor of the expected conflagration; but a few moments dispersed the apprehension and the fancied smoke together. The day advanced, and yet the genus of solitude reigned over the mysterious glen. Not a sound emerged from it, not a human form was seen near it, not a sign of a hostile assault or of a friendly return could be detected. All in that direction lay buried in silence, as if the ravine had swallowed its tenants, in imitation of the grave.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"To deck my list by Nature were designed
Such shining expletives of human kind;
Who want, while through blank life they dream along,
Sense to be right, and passion to be wrong."
—YOUNG.

THE disappearance of Mr. Woods occasioned no uneasiness at first. An hour elapsed before the captain thought it necessary to relate the occurrence to his family, when a general panic prevailed among the females. Even Maud had hoped the savages would respect the sacred character, of the divine, though she knew not why; and here was one of her principal grounds of hope, as connected with Robert Willoughby, slid from beneath her feet.

"What can we do, Willoughby?" asked the affectionate mother, almost reduced to despair. "I will go myself in search of my son—they will respect me, a woman and a mother."

"You little know the enemy we have to deal with, Wilhelmina, or so rash a thought could not have crossed your mind. We will not precipitate; a few hours may bring some change to direct us. One thing I learn from Wood's delay. The Indians cannot be far off, and he must be with them, or in their hands; else would he return after having visited the mills and the houses beneath the cliffs."

This sounded probable, and all felt there was a relief in fancying that their friends were still near them, and were not traversing the wilderness as captives.

"I feel less apprehension than any of you," observed Beulah, in her placid manner. "If Bob is in the hands of an American party, the brother-in-law of Evert Beekman cannot come to much harm; with British Indians he will be respected for his own sake, as soon as he can make himself known."

"I have thought of all this, my child"—answered the father, musing—"and there is reason in it. It will be difficult, however, for Bob to make his real character certain, in his present circumstances. He does not appear the man he is; and should there even be a white among his captors who can read, he has not a paper with him to sustain his word."

"But he promised me faithfully to use Evert's name did he ever fall into American hands"—resumed Beulah earnestly—"and Evert has said, again and again, that my brother could never be his enemy."

"Heaven help us all, dear child!" answered the captain, kissing his daughter—"it is, indeed, a cruel war, when such aids are to be called in for our protection. We will endeavor to be cheerful, notwithstanding; for we know of nothing yet that ought to alarm us out of reason; all may come right before the sun sets."

The captain looked at his family, and endeavored to smile, but he met no answering gleam of happiness on either face; nor was his own effort very successful. As for his wife, she was never known to be aught but miserable while any she loved was in doubtful safety. She lived

entirely out of herself, and altogether for her husband, children, and friends; a woman less selfish, or one more devoted to the affections, never existing. Then Beulah, with all her reliance on the magic of Evert's name, and with the deep feelings that had been awakened within her as a wife and mother, still loved her brother as tenderly as ever. As for Maud, the agony she endured was increased by her efforts to keep it from breaking out in some paroxysms that might betray her secret; and her features were getting an expression of stern resolution, which, blended with her beauty, gave them a grandeur her father had never before seen in her bright countenance.

"This child suffers on Bob's account more than any of us"—observed the captain, drawing his pet toward him, placing her kindly on his knee, and folding her to his bosom. "She has no husband yet to divide her heart; all her love centers on her brother."

The look which Beulah cast upon her father was not reproachful, for that was an expression she would not have indulged with him; but it was one in which pain and mortification were so obvious, as to induce the mother to receive her into her own arms.

"Hugh, you are unjust to Beulah"—said the anxious mother—"nothing can ever cause this dear girl, either, to forget to feel for any of us."

The captain's ready explanation, and affectionate kiss, brought a smile again to Beulah's face, though it shone amid tears. All was, however, immediately forgotten; for the parties understood each other, and Maud profited by the scene to escape from the room. This flight broke up the conference; and the captain, after exhorting his wife and daughter to set an example of fortitude to the rest of the females, left the house, to look after his duties among the men.

The absence of Joel cast a shade of doubt over the minds of the disaffected. These last were comparatively numerous, comprising most of the native Americans in the Hut, the blacks and Joyce excepted. Strides had been enabled to effect his purposes more easily with his own countrymen by working on their good qualities, as well as on their bad. Many of these men—most of them, indeed—meant well, but their attachment to the cause of their native land laid them open to assaults, against which Mike and Jamie Allen were insensible. Captain Willoughby was an Englishman, in the first place; he was an old army officer, in the next; and he had an only son, who was confessedly in open arms against the independence of America. It is easy to see how a demagogue like Joel, who had free access to the ears of his comrades, could improve circumstances like these to his own particular objects. Nevertheless, he had difficulties to contend with. If it were true that Parson Woods still insisted on praying for the King, it was known that the captain laughed at him for his reverence for Cæsar; if Robert Willoughby were a major in the royal forces, Evert Beekman was a colonel in the continentals; if the owner of the manor were born in England, his wife and children were born in America; and he himself was often heard to express his convictions of the justice of most of that for which the provincials were contending—all, the worthy captain had not yet made up his mind to concede to them.

Then, most of the Americans in the Hut entertained none of the selfish and narrow views of Joel and the miller. Their wish was to do right, in the main; and though obnoxious to the charge of entertaining certain prejudices that render them peculiarly liable to become the dupes of a demagogue, they submitted to many of the better impulses, and were indisposed to be guilty of any act of downright injustice. The perfect integrity with which they had ever been treated, too, had its influence; nor was the habitual kindness of Mrs. Willoughby to their wives and children forgotten; nor the gentleness of Beulah, or the beauty, spirit, and generous impulses of Maud. In a word, the captain, when he went forth to review his men, who were now all assembled under arms within the palisades for that purpose,

went to meet a wavering, rather than a positively disaffected or rebellious body.

"Attention!" cried Joyce, as his commanding officer came in front of a line which contained men of different colors, statures, ages, dresses, countries, habits, and physiognomies, making it a sort of epitome of the population of the whole colony, as it existed in that day—"Attention! Present arms!"

The captain pulled off his hat complacently in return to this salute, though he was obliged to smile at the array which met his eyes. Every one of the Dutchmen had got his musket to an order, following a sort of fugleman of their own; while Mike had invented a "motion" that would have puzzled any one but himself to account for. The butt of the piece was projected toward the captain, quite out of line, while the barrel rested on his own shoulder. Still, as his arms were extended to the utmost, the County Leitrim-man fancied he was performing much better than common. Jamie had correct notions of the perpendicular, from having used the plumb-nob so much, though even he made the trifling mistake of presenting arms with the lock outward. As for the Yankees, they were all tolerably exact, in everything but time and the line, bringing their pieces down, one after another, much as they were in the practice of following their leaders in matters of opinion. The negroes defied description; nor was it surprising they failed, each of them thrusting his head forward to see how the "motions" looked, in a way that prevented any particular attention to his own part of the duty. The sergeant had the good sense to see that his drill had not yet produded perfection, and he brought his mento a shoulder again as soon as possible. In this he succeeded perfectly, with the exception that just half of the arms were brought on the right, and the other half to the left shoulders.

"We shall do better, your honor, as we get a little more drill"—said Joyce, with an apologetic salute—"Corporal Strides has a tolerable idea of the manual, and he usually acts as our fugleman. When he gets back we shall improve."

"When he gets back, sergeant—can you or any other man tell when that will be?"

"Yes, yer honor," sputtered Mike, with the eagerness of a boy. "I'se the man to tell yees that same."

"You? What can you know, that is not known to all of us, my good Michael?"

"I knows what I sees; and if yon isn't Mister Strides, then I am not acquainted with his sthraddle."

Sure enough, Joel appeared at the gate as Mike concluded his assertions. How he got there no one knew; for a good lookout had been kept in the direction of the mill; and yet here was the overseer applying for admission, as if he had fallen from the clouds! Of course, the application was not denied, though made in a manner so unexpected, and Joel stood in front of his old comrades at the hoe and the plow, if not in arms, in less than a a minute. His return was proclaimed through the house in an incredibly short space of time, by the aid of the children, and all the females came pouring out from the court to learn the tidings, led by Mrs. Strides and her young brood.

"Have you anything to communicate te me in private, Strides?" the captain demanded, maintaining an appearance of *sang-froid* that he was far from feeling—"or can your report be made here, before the whole settlement?"

"It's just as the captain pleases," answered the wily demagogue; "though to my notion, the people have a right to know all, in an affair that touches the common interest."

"Attention! men"—cried the sergeant—"By platoons, to the right—"

"No matter, Joyce," interrupted the captain, waving his hand—"Let the men remain. You have held communications with our visitors, I know, Strides?"

"We have, Captain Willoughby, and a desperate sort of visitors be they! A more ugly set of Mohawks and Onondagas I never laid eyes on."

"As for their appearance, it is a matter of indifference to me—what is the object of their visit?"

"I mean ugly behaved, and they de-

serve all I say of 'em. Their ar'nd according to their own tell, is to seize the captain and his family in behalf of the colonies."

As Joel uttered this, he cast a glance along the line of faces paraded before him, in order to read the effect it might produce. That it was not lost on some, was as evident as that it was on others. The captain, however, appeared unmoved, and there was a slight air of incredulity in the smile that curled his lip.

"This, then, you report as being the business of the party in coming to this place?" he said quietly.

"I do, sir; and an ugly ar'nd it is, in times like these."

"Is there any person in authority in a party that pretends to move about the colony with such high duties?"

"There's one or two white men among 'em, if that's what the captain means; they pretend to be duly authorized and app'inted to act on behalf of the people."

At each allusion to the people, Joel invariably looked toward his particular partisans, in order to note the effect the use of the word might produce. On the present occasion he even ventured to wink at the miller.

"If acting on authority, why do they keep aloof? I have no such character for resisting the laws, that any who come clothed with its mantle need fear resistance."

"Why, I s'pose they reason in some such manner as this. There's two laws in operation at this time; the King's law and the people's law. I take it, this party comes in virtue of the people's law, whereas it is likely the law the captain means is the King's law. The difference is so great, that one or t'other carries the day, just as the King's friends or the people's friends happen to be the strongest. These men don't like to trust to their law, when the captain may think it safest to trust a little to his'n."

"And all this was told you, Strides, in order to be repeated to me?"

"Not a word on't; it's all my own consait about the matter. Little passed between us."

"And now," said the captain, relieving his breast by a long sigh, "I presume I may inquire about your companion. You probably have ascertained who he is?"

"Lord, Captain Willoughby, I was altogether dumbfounded when the truth came upon me of a sudden! I never should have known the major in that dress in the world, or out of the world either; but he walks so like the captain, that as I followed after him I said to myself, who can it be?—and then the walk came over me, as it might be; and then I remembered last night, and the stranger that was out with the captain, and how he occupied the room next to the library, and them things; and so, when I come to look in his face, there was the major, sure enough!"

Joel lied famously in this account; but he believed himself safe, as no one could very well contradict him.

"Now you have explained the manner in which you recognized my son, Strides," added the captain, "I will thank you to let me know what has become of him?"

"He's with the savages. Having come so far to seize the father, it wasn't in natur' to let the son go free, when he walked right into the lion's den, like."

"And how could the savages know he was my son? Did they, too, recognize the family walk?"

Strides was taken aback at this question, and he even had the grace to color a little. He saw that he was critically placed; for in addition to the suggestions of conscience, he understood the captain sufficiently to know he was a man who would not trifle, in the event of his suspicions becoming active. He knew he deserved the gallows, and Joyce was a man who would execute him in an instant did his commander order it. The idea fairly made the traitor tremble in his shoes.

"Ah! I've got a little ahead of my story," he said, hastily. "But perhaps I had better tell everything as it happened—"

"That will be the simplest and clearest course. In order that there may be no interruption, we will go into my room,

where Joyce will follow as soon as he has dismissed his men."

This was done, and in a minute or two the captain and Joel were seated in the library, Joyce respectfully standing; the old soldier always declining to assume any familiarity with his superior. We shall give the substance of most of Joel's report in our own language; preferring it, defective as it is, to that of the overseer, which was no bad representative of his cunning, treacherous and low mind.

It seems, then, that the bearers of the flag were amicably received by the Indians. The men toward whom they were led on the rocks, were the chiefs of the party, who treated them with proper respect. The sudden movement was explained to them, as connected with their meal: and the chiefs, accompanied by the major and Strides, proceeded to the house of the miller. Here, by means of a white man for an interpreter, the major had demanded the motive of the strangers in coming into the settlement. The answer was a frank demand for the surrender of the Hut and all it contained, to the authorities of the Continental Congress. The major had endeavored to persuade a white man, who professed to hold the legal authority for what was doing, of the perfectly neutral disposition of his father, when, according to Jeel's account, to his own great astonishment, the argument was met by the announcement of Robert Willoughby's true character, and a sneering demand if it were likely a man who had a son in the royal army, and who had kept that son secreted in his own house, would be very indifferent to the success of the royal cause.

"They've got a wonderful smart man there for a magistrate, I can tell you," added Joel, with emphasis, "and he ra'ally bore as hard on the major as a lawyer before a court. How he found out that the major was at the Hut is a little strange, seein' that none of us know'd of it; but they've got extraor'nary means nowadays."

"And did Major Willoughby admit his true character, when charged with being in the King's service?"

"He did—and like a gentleman. He only insisted that his sole ar'nd out here was to see his folks, and that he intended to go back to York the moment he had paid his visit."

"How did the person you mention receive his explanations?"

"Waal, to own the truth, he laughed at it like all natur'. I don't believe they put any great weight on a syllable the major told 'em. I never see critters with such onbelievin' faces! After talking as long as suited themselves, they ordered the major to be shut up in a buttery, with a warrior at the door for a sentinel; a'ter which they took to examining me."

Joel then proceeded with an account—his own account always, be it remembered—of what passed between himself and the strangers. They had questioned him closely touching the nature of the defenses of the Hut, the strength of the garrison, its disposition, the number and quality of the arms, and the amount of the ammunition.

"You may depend on't, I gave a good account," continued the overseer, in a self-satisfied way. "In the first place, I told 'em, the captain had a lieutenant with him that had sarved out the whull French war; then I put the men up to fifty at once, seein' it was just as easy to say that, as thirty or thirty-three. As to the arms, I told 'em more than half the pieces were double-barreled; and that the captain, in particular, carried a rifle that had killed nine savages in one fight."

"You were much mistaken in that, Joel. It is true that a celebrated chief once fell by this rifle; even that is not a matter for boasting."

"Waal, them that told me on't, said that two had fallen before it, and I put it up to nine at once, to make a good story better. Nine men had a more desperate sound than two; and when you do begin to brag, a man shouldn't be backward. I thought, however, that they were most nonplussed when I told 'em of the field-piece."

"The field-piece, Strides! Why did you venture on an exaggeration that any forward movement of theirs must expose?"

"We'll see to that, captain—we'll see to that. Field-pieces are desperate dampers to Indian courage, so I thought I'd just let 'em have a six-pounder, by way of tryin' their natur's. They looked like men goin' to execution, when I told 'em of the cannon, and what a history it had gone through."

"And what may have been this history, pray?"

"I just told 'em it was the very gun the captain had took from the French, about which we've all heern tell; and that, as everybody knows, was a desperate piece, having killed more than a hundred reg'lars before the captain charged baggonet on it and carried it off."

This was a very artful speech, since it alluded to the most distinguished exploit of Captain Willoughby's military life; one of which it would have been more than human, had he not been a little proud. All who knew him had heard of this adventure, and Joel cunningly turned it to account in the manner seen. The allusion served to put to sleep, for the moment at least, certain very unpleasant suspicions that were getting to be active in his superior's mind.

"There was no necessity, Strides, for saying anything about that affair"—the captain modestly interposed. "It happened a long time since, and might well be forgotten. Then you know we have no gun to support your account; when our deficiency is ascertained, it will all be set down to the true cause—a wish to conceal our real weakness."

"I beg your honor's pardon," put in Joyce—"I think Strides has acted in a military manner in this affair. It is according to the art of war for the besieged to pretend to be stronger than they are; and even besiegers sometimes put a better face than the truth will warrant on their strength. Military accounts, as your honor well knows, never pass exactly for gospel, unless is be with the raw hands."

"Then," added Joel, "I know'd what I was about, seein' that we had a cannon ready for use, as soon as it could be mounted."

"I think I understand Strides, your honor," resumed the sergeant. "I have carved a 'quaker,' as an ornament for the gateway, intending to saw it in two in the middle, and place the pieces crosswise over the entrance, as your honor has often seen such things in the garrison—like the brass ornaments on the artillery caps, I mean, your honor. Well this gun is finished and painted, and I intended to split it, and have it up this very week. I suppose Joel has had it in his mind, quaker fashion."

"The sergeant's right. That piece looks as much like a real cannon as one of our catechisms is like another. The muzzle is more than a foot deep, and has a plaguy gunpowder look!"

"But this gun is not mounted; and even if it were it could only be set up for show," observed the captain.

"Put that cannon up once, and I'll answer for it that no Injin faces it. 'Twill be as good as a dozen sentinels," answered Joel. "As for mountin,' I thought of that before I said a syllable about the critter. There's the new truck-wheels in the court, all ready to hold it, and the carpenters can put the hinder part to the whull in an hour or two, and that in a way no Injin could tell the difference between it and a ra'al cannon at ten yards."

"This is plausible, your honor," said Joyce respectfully, "and it shows that Corporal Strides"—Joel insisted he was a sergeant, but the real Simon Pure never gave him a title higher than that of corporal "and it shows that Corporal Strides has an idea of war. By mounting that piece, and using it with discretion—refusing it at the right moment, and showing it at another—a great deal might be done with it, either in a siege or an assault. If your honor will excuse the liberty, I would respectfully suggest that it might be well to set the quaker on his legs, and plant him at the gate as an exhorter."

The captain reflected a moment, and then desired the overseer to proceed in his account. The rest of Joel's story was soon told. He had mystified the strangers, according to his own account of the matter, so thoroughly, by affecting to

withhold nothing, that they considered him as a sort of ally, and did not put him in confinement at all. It is true, he was placed *en surveillance*; but the duty was so carelessly performed, that at the right moment, he had passed down the ravine, a direction in which a movement was not expected, and buried himself in the woods, so very effectually that it would have baffled pursuit, had any been attempted. After making a very long *detour*, that consumed hours, he turned the entire valley, and actually reached the Hut, under the cover of the rivulet and its bushes, or precisely by the route in which he and Mike had gone forth in quest of Maud the evening of the major's arrival. This latter fact, however, Joel had reasons of his own for concealing.

"You have told us nothing of Mr. Woods, Strides," the captain observed, when Joel's account was ended.

"Mr. Woods! I can tell the captain nothing of that gentleman; I supposed he was here."

The manner in which the chaplain had left the Hut, and his disappearance in the ravine, were then explained to the overseer, who evidently had quitted the mill, on his return, before the divine performed his exploit. There was a sinister expression in Joel's eyes as he heard the account, that might have given the alarm to men more suspicious than the two soldiers; but he had the address to conceal all he felt or thought.

"If Mr. Woods has gone into the hands of the Injins in his church shirt," rejoined the overseer, "his case is hopeless, so far as captivity is concerned. One of the charges ag'in the captain is, that the chaplin he keeps prays as regularly for the King as he used to do when it was lawful, and agreeable to public feelin'."

"This you heard, while under examination before the magistrate you have named?" demanded the captain.

"As good as that, and something more to the same p'int. The 'squire complained awfully of a minister's prayin' for the King and r'yal family, when the country was fightin' 'em."

"In that, the Rev. Mr. Woods only obeys orders," said the sergeant.

"But they say not. The orders is gone out now, they pretend, for no man to pray for any on 'em."

"Ay—orders from the magistrates, perhaps. But the Rev. Mr. Woods is a divine, and has his own superiors in the Church, and they must issue the commands that he obeys. I dare to say, your honor, if the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the commander-in-chief of the Church, whoever he may be, should issue a general order directing all the parsons not to pray for King George, the Rev. Mr. Woods would have no scruple about obeying. But it's a different thing when a justice of the peace undertakes to stand fugleman for the clergy. It's like a navy captain undertaking to wheel a regiment."

"Poor Woods!" exclaimed the captain—"Had he been ruled by me, he would have dropped those prayers, and it would have been better for us both. But he is of your opinion, sergeant, and thinks that a layman can have no authority over a gownsman."

"And isn't he right, your honor? Think what a mess of it the militia officers make, when they undertake to meddle with the regular corps. Some of our greatest difficulties in the last war came from such awkward hands attempting to manage machines of which they had no just notions. As for praying, your honor, I'm nowise particular who I pray for, or what I pray for, so long as it be all set down in general orders that come from the right headquarters; and I think the Rev. Mr. Woods ought to be judged by the same rule."

As the captain saw no use in prolonging the dialogue, he dismissed his companions. He then sought his wife, in order to make her acquainted with the actual state of things. This last was a painful duty, though Mrs. Willoughby and her daughters heard the truth with less of apprehension than the husband and father had anticipated. They had suffered so much from uncertainty, that there was a relief in learning the truth. The mother did not think the authorities of the colony

would hurt her son, whom she fancied, all men must, in a degree, love as she loved. Beulah thought of her own husband as Bob's safeguard; while Maud felt it to be comparative happiness to know he was unharmed, and still so near her.

This unpleasant duty discharged, the captain began to bethink him seriously of his military trust. After some reflection, and listening to a few more suggestions from Joyce, he consented to let the "quaker" be put on wheels. The carpenters were immediately set at work to achieve this job, which the sergeant volunteered to superintend in person. As for Joel, his wife, and children, with the miller, occupied most of the morning; the day turning, and even drawing toward its close, ere he became visible, as had formerly been his wont, among the men of the settlement.

All this time, everything without the palisades lay in the silence of nature. The sun cast its glories athwart the lovely scene, as in one of the Sabbaths of the woods; but man was nowhere visible. Not a hostile Indian or white exhibited himself; and the captain began to suspect that, satisfied with their captures, the party had commenced their return toward the river, postponing his own arrest for some other occasion. So strong did this impression become toward the close of the day, that he was actually engaged in writing to some friends of influence in Albany and on the Mohawk to interpose their names and characters in his son's behalf, when the sergeant, about nine o'clock, the hour when he had been ordered to parade the guard for the first half of the night, presented himself at the door of his room, to make an important report.

"What now, Joyce?" demanded the captain. "Are any of our fellows sleepy, and plead illness?"

"Worse than that, your honor, I greatly fear," was the answer. "Of the ten men your honor commanded me to detail for the guard, five are missing. I set them down as deserters.'

"Deserters! This is serious indeed; let the signal be made for a general parade—the people cannot yet have gone to bed; we will look into this."

As Joyce made it a matter of religion "to obey orders," this command was immediately put in execution. In five minutes, a messenger came to summon the captain to the court, where the garrison was under arms. The sergeant stood in front of the little party with a lantern, holding his muster roll in his hand. The first glance told the captain that a serious reduction had taken place in his forces, and he led the sergeant aside to hear his report.

"What is the result of your inquiries, Joyce?" he demanded, with more uneasiness than he would have liked to betray openly.

"We have lost just half our men, sir. The miller, most of the Yankees, and two of the Dutchmen, are not on parade; neither is one of them to be found in his quarters. They have either gone over to the enemy, Captain Willoughby, or disliking the appearance of things here, they have taken to the woods for safety."

"And abandoned their wives and children, sergeant! Men would scarcely do that."

"Their wives and children have deserted, too, sir. Not a chick or child belonging to either of the runaways is to be found in the Hut."

CHAPTER XIX.

"For all the Welshmen, hearing thou wert dead,
Are gone to Bolingbroke, dispersed and fled."
—RICHARD III.

THIS was startling intelligence to receive just as night had shut in, and under the other circumstances of the case. Touching the men who still remained, Captain Willoughby conceived it prudent to inquire into their characters and names, in order to ascertain the ground he stood on, and to govern his future course accordingly. He put the question to the sergeant, therefore, as soon as he could lead him far enough from the little array to be certain he was out of ear-shot.

"We have Michael O'Hearn, Jamie

Allen, the two carpenters, the three niggers, Joel, and the three Dutchmen that last came into the settlement, and the two lads that Strides engaged at the beginning of the year, left," was the answer. "These, counting your honor and myself, make just fifteen men; quite enough yet, I should think, to make good the house in case of an assault—though I fear everything like an outwork must be abandoned."

"On the whole, these are the best of our men," returned the captain; "I mean the most trustworthy. I count on Mike, Jamie, and the blacks, as being as much to be relied on as we are ourselves. Joel, too, is a man of resources, if he will but do his duty under fire."

"Corporal Strides is still an untried soldier, your honor; though recruits even, sometimes do wonders. Of course I shall reduce the guard to half its former strength, as the men must have some sleep, sir."

"We must depend very much on your vigilance and mine to-night, Joyce. You shall take the guard till one, when I will stand it for the rest of the night. I will speak to the men before you dismiss them. An encouraging word, just now, may be worth a platoon to us."

The sergeant seldom dissented from any suggestion of his commanding officer, and the scheme was carried out on the spot. The lantern was so placed as to permit the captain to see the heterogeneous row of countenances that was drawn up before him, and he proceeded:

"It seems, my friends," he said, "that some of our people have been seized with a panic, and have deserted. These mistaken men have not only fled themselves, but they have induced their wives and children to follow them. A little reflection will show you to what distress all must be reduced by this ill-judged flight. Fifty miles from another settlement of any size, and more than thirty from even a single hut, beyond the cabin of a hunter, days must pass before they can reach a place of safety, even should they escape the savage foe that we know to be scouring the woods. The women and children will not have sufficient art to conceal their trail, nor sufficient strength to hold out against hunger and fatigue many hours. God forgive them for what they have done, and guide them through the difficulties and pains by which they are menaced! As for us, we must determine to do our whole duty, or at once to retire, with the consent of each other. If there is a man among you, then, who apprehends the consequences of standing to his arms, and of defending his house, let him confess it frankly; he shall have leave to depart, with all that belongs to him, taking food and the means of subsistence and defense with him. I wish no man to remain with me and mine, but he who can do it cheerfully. The night is now dark, and by quitting the Hut at an early hour, such a start might be gained over any pursuers, as to place him in comparative security before morning. If any such man is here, let him now speak out honestly, and fear nothing. The gate shall be opened for his march."

The captain paused, but not a soul answered. A common sentiment of loyalty seemed to bind every one of the listeners to his duty. The dark eyes of the negroes rolled along the short rank to see who would be the first to desert their master, and grins of delight showed the satisfaction with which they noted the effect of the appeal. As for Mike, he felt too strongly to keep silence, and he muttered the passing impressions aloud.

"Och!"—growled the County Leitrimman—"is it a good journey that I wish the runaways? That it isn't, nor many a good male either, as they trudge alang t'rough the woods, with their own consciences forenent their eyes, pricking them up to come back, like so many t'ieves of the wor-r-ld, as they are, every mother's son of 'em, women and all. I'd nivir do that; no, not if my head was all scalp, down to the soles of my fut, and an Injun was at every inch of it, to cut out his summer clothes of my own skin. Talk of religion amang sich cr'athures! Why, there isn't enough moral in one of thim to carry him through the shortest prayer the Lord allows a Christian to utter.

Divil burn 'em, say I, that's my kindest wish in their behalf."

The captain waited patiently for this soliloquy to terminate; then he dismissed the men, with a few more words of encouragement, and his thanks for the fidelity they, at least, had shown. By this time the night had got to be dark, and the court was much more so, on account of the shadows of the buildings, than places in the open air. As the captain turned aside to give his last instructions to Joyce, he discovered, by the light of the lantern the latter held, a figure standing at no great distance, quite dimly seen on account of its proximity to the walls of the Hut. It was clearly a man; and as all the males able to bear arms, a single sentinel outside the court excepted, were supposed to be in the group that had not yet separated, the necessity of ascertaining the character of this unlooked-for visitor flashed on the minds of the old soldiers at the same instant. Joyce raised the lantern, as they moved quickly toward the motionless form, and its light glanced athwart a pair of wild, glowing, dark eyes, and the red visage of an Indian.

"Nick!" exclaimed the captain, "is that you? What has brought you here again, and how have you entered the palisades? Do you come as a friend, to aid us, or as an enemy?"

"Too much question, cap'in—too much like squaw; ask all togeder. Go to book-room; Nick follow; tell all he got to say."

The captain whispered the sergeant to ascertain whether the watch without was vigilant, when he led the way to the library, where, as he expected, he found his wife and daughters anxiously waiting his appearance.

"Oh! Hugh, I trust it is not as bad as we feared!" cried the mother, as the captain entered the room, closely attended by the Tuscarora; our men cannot be so heartless as to desert us at such a moment?"

The captain kissed his wife, said a word or two of encouragement, and pointed to the Indian.

"Nick!" exclaimed all three of the females, in a breath; though the tones of their voices denoted very different sensations at the unexpected appearance of their old acquaintance. Mrs. Willoughby's exclamation was not without pleasure, for she thought the man her friend; Beulah's was filled with alarm, little Evert and savage massacres suddenly crossing the sensitive mind of the young mother; while Maud's tone had much of the stern resolution that she had summoned to sustain her in a moment of such fearful trial.

"Yes, Nick—Sassy Nick," repeated the Indian, in his guttural voice; "ole friend—you no glad see him?"

"That will depend on your errand," interposed the captain. "Are you one of the party that is now lying at the mill? But, stop; how did you get within the palisades? First answer me that."

"Come in? Tree no good to stop Injin. Can't do it wid branches, how do it widout? Want plenty of musket and plenty of soldier to do dat. Dis no garrison, cap'in, to make Nick afeard. Always tell him too much hole to be tight."

"This is not answering my question, fellow. By what means did you pass the palisades?"

"What means? Injin means, sartin. Come like cat, jump like deer, slide like snake. Nick great Tuscarora chief; know well how warrior march, when he dig up hatchet."

"And Nick has been a great hanger-on of garrisons, and should know the use that I could make of his back. You will remember, Tuscarora, that I have had you flogged more than once in my day."

This was said menacingly, and with more warmth, perhaps, than was prudent. It caused the listeners to start, as if a sudden and new danger rose before their eyes, and the anxious looks he encountered warned the captain that he was probably going too far. As for Nick himself, the gathering thunder-cloud is not darker than his visage became at the words he heard; it seemed by the moral writhing of his spirit as if every disgracing blow he had received was at that instant torturing his flesh anew, blended with the keenest feel-

ing of ignominy. Captain Willoughby was startled at the effect he had produced; but it was too late to change his course; and he remained in dignified quiet, awaiting the workings of the Tuscarora's mind.

It was more than a minute ere Nick made any reply. Gradually, but very slowly, the expression of his visage changed. It finally became as stoical in expression as severe training could render the human countenance, and as unmoved as marble. Then he found the language he wanted.

"Listen," said the Indian, sternly. "Cap'in ole man. Got a head like snow on rock. He bold soldier; but he no got wisdom enough for gray hair. Why he put the hand rough, on place where whip strike? Wise man nebber do dat. Last winter he cold; fire wanted to make him warm. Much ice, much storm, much snow. World seemed bad—fit only for bear, and snake, dat hide in rock. Well; winter gone away; ice gone away; snow gone away; storm gone away. Summer come in his place. Ebberyt'ing good—ebberyt'ing pleasant. Why t'ink of winter, when summer come, and drive him away wid pleasant sky?"

"In order to provide for its return. He who never thought of the evil day, in the hour of his prosperity, would find that he has forgotten, not only a duty, but the course of wisdom,"

"He is not wise!" said Nick, sternly. "Cap'in pale face chief. He got garrison; got soldier; got musket. Well, he flog warrior's back; make blood come. Dat bad enough; worse to put finger on old sore, and make 'e pain, and 'e shame come back ag'in."

"Perhaps it would have been more generous, Nick, to have said nothing about it; but you see how I am situated; an enemy without, my men deserting, a bad lookout, and one finding his way into my very courtyard, and I ignorant of the means."

"Nick tell cap'in all about means. If red men outside, shoot 'em; if garrison run away, flog garrison; if don't know, l'arn; but don't flog back ag'in, on old sore!"

"Well, well, say no more about it, Nick. Here is a dollar to keep you in rum, and we will talk of other matters."

Nick heeded not the money, though it was held before his eyes some little time to tempt him. Perceiving that the Tuscarora was now acting as a warrior and a chief, which Nick would do, and do well, on occasion, the captain pocketed the offering, and regulated his own course accordingly.

"At all events, I have a right to insist on knowing, first, by what means you entered the palisades; and, second, what business has brought you here, at night, and so suddenly."

"Ask Nick, cap'n, all he right to ask; but don't touch ole flog. How I cross palisade? Where your sentinel to stop Injin? One at gate; well, none all around, t'other place. Get in, up here, down dere, over yonder. Ten, twenty, t'ree spot—s'pose him tree? climb him. S'pose him palisade?—climb him, too. What help? Soldier out at gate, when Nick get over t'other end! Come in court, too, when he want. Half gate, half no gate. So easy, 'shamed to brag of. Cap'n once Nick's friend—went on same war-path—dat in ole time. Both warrior; both went ag'in French garrison. Well; who crept in, close by cannon, open gate, let pale men in? Great Tuscarora do dat; no flog, den—no talk of ole sore, dat night!"

"This is all true enough, Wyandotte." This was Nick's loftiest appellation; and a grim but faint smile crossed his visage as he heard it again in the mouth of one who had known him when its sound carried terror to the hearts of his enemies. "This is all true, Wyandotte, and I have ever given you credit for it. On that occasion you were bold as the lion, and as cunning as a fox—you were much honored for that exploit."

"No ole sore in dat, um!" cried Nick, in a way so startling as to sicken Mrs. Willoughby to the heart. "No call Nick dog, dat night. He all warrior, den—all face; no back."

"I have said you were honored for your conduct, Nick, and paid for it. Now let me know what has brought you here to-night, and whence you come."

There was another pause. Gradually

the countenance of the Indian became less and less fierce, until it lost its expression of malignant resentment in one in which human emotions of a kinder nature predominated.

"Squaw good," he said, even gently, waving his hand toward Mrs. Willoughby —"Got son; love him like little baby. Nick come six, two time before, runner from her son."

"My son, Wyandotte!" exclaimed the mother—"Bring you any tidings, now, from my boy?"

"No bring tidin'—too heavy; Indian don't love to carry load—bring letter."

The cry from the three females was now common, each holding out her hand, with an involuntary impulse, to receive the note. Nick drew the missive from a fold of his garment, and placed it in the hand of Mrs. Willoughby with a quiet grace that a courtier might have wished to equal in vain.

The note was short, and had been written in pencil, on a leaf torn from some book of coarse paper. The handwriting, however, was at once recognized as Robert Willoughby's, though there was no address, nor any signature. The paper merely contained the following—

"Trust to your defenses and to nothing else. This party has many white men in it disguised as Indians. I am suspected, if not known. You will be tampered with, but the wisest course is to be firm. If Nick is honest he can tell you more; if false, this note will be shown, even though it be delivered. Secure the inner gates, and depend more on the house itself than on the palisades. Fear nothing for me—my life can be in no danger."

This note was read by each in succession, Maud turning aside to conceal the tears that fell fast on the paper, as she perused it. She read it last, and was enabled to retain it; and precious to her heart was the boon at such a moment, when nearly every sensation of her being centered in intense feeling in behalf of the captive.

"We are told to inquire the particulars of you, Nick," observed the captain; "I hope you will tell us nothing but truth. A lie is so unworthy a warrior's mouth!"

"Nick didn't lie 'bout beaver dam! Cap'in no find him good, as Indian say?"

"In that you dealt honestly, and I give you credit for it. Has any one seen this letter but ourselves, yourself, and the person who wrote it?"

"What for ask? If Nick say no, cap'in think he lie. Even fox tell trut' some time; why not Injun? Nick say no."

"Where did you leave my son, and when? Where is the party of redskins at this moment?"

"All pale-face in hurry! Ask ten, one, four question, altogeder. Well; answer him so. Down here at mill; down dere, at mill; half an hour, six, two, ten o'clock."

"I understand you to say that Major Willoughby was at the mill when you saw him last and that this was only half an hour since?"

The Tuscarora nodded his head in assent, but made no other reply. Even as he did this, his keen eyes rolled over the pallid faces of the females, in a way to awaken the captain's distrust, and he resumed his questions in a tone that partook more of the military severity of his ancient habits, than of the gentler manner he had been accustomed to use of late years.

"You know me, Nick," he said sternly, "and ought to dread my displeasure."

"What cap'in mean now?" demanded the Indian, quietly.

"That the same whip is in this fort that I always kept in the other, in which you knew me to dwell; nor have I forgotten how to use it."

The Tuscarora gazed at the captain with a very puzzling expression, though, in the main, his countenance appeared to be ironical rather than fierce.

"What for talk of whip now?" he said. "Even Yengeese gen'ral hide whip when he see enemy. Soldier can't fight when back sore. When battle near, den all good friend; when battle over, den flog, flog, flog. Why talk so? Cap'in nebber strike Wyandotté."

"Your memory must be short to say this! I thought an Indian kept a better record of what passed."

"No man dare strike Wyandotte!" exclaimed the Indian, with energy. "No

man—pale-face or redskin—can give blow on back of Wyandotte, and see sun set!"

"Well—well—Nick; we will not dispute on this point, but let bygones be bygones. What has happened, has happened, and I hope will never occur again."

"Dat happen to Nick—Sassy Nick—poor, drunken Nick—to Wyandotte, nebber!"

"I believe I begin to understand you now, Tuscarora, and am glad I have a chief and a warrior in my house, instead of a poor miserable outcast. Shall I have the pleasure of filling you a glass in honor of our old campaigns?"

"Nick always dry—Wyandotte know no thirst. Nick beggar—ask for rum—pray for rum—t'ink of rum—talk of rum—laugh for rum—cry for rum. Wyandotte don't know rum when he see him. Wyandotte beg not'in'; no, not his scalp."

"All this sounds well, and I am both willing and glad, chief, to receive you in the character in which you give me to understand you have now come. A warrior of Wyandotte's high name is too proud to carry a forked tongue in his mouth, and I shall hear nothing but truth. Tell me, then, all you know about this party at the mill; what has brought it here, how you came to meet my son, and what will be the next step of his captors. Answer the questions in the order in which I put them."

"Wyandotte not newspaper to tell eberyt'ing at once. Let cap'in talk like one chief speaking to anoder."

"Then, tell me, first, what you know of this paty at the mill. Are there many pale-faces in it?"

"Put 'em in the river," answered the Indian, sententiously; "water tell the trut'."

"You think there are many among them that would wash white?"

"Wyandotte knows so. When did red warriors ever travel on their path like hogs in drove? One red man there as Great Spirit made him; by his side two red men as paint made 'em. This soon told on trail."

"You struck their trail, then, and joined their company in that manner."

Another nod indicated the assent of the Indian. Perceiving that the Tuscarora did not intend to speak, the captain continued his interrogatories.

"And how did the trail betray the secret, chief?" he asked.

"Toe turn out—step too short—trail broad—trail too plain—march too short."

"You must have followed them some distance, Wyandotte, to learn all this?"

"Follow from Mohawk—join 'em at mill. Tuscarora don't like too much travel with Mohawk?"

"But according to your account there cannot be a great many redskins in the party, if the white men so much outnumber them."

Nick now raised his right hand, showing all the fingers and the thumb at each exhibition, for several times. Then he raised it once, showing only the forefinger and thumb.

"This makes twenty-two, Nick. Do you include yourself in the number?"

"Wyandotte, a Tuscarora—he count Mohawks."

"True—are there any other red men among them?"

"Oneida, so"—holding up four fingers only. After which he held up a single finger, adding—"Onondaga, so."

"Twenty-two Mohawks, four Oneidas, and a single Onondaga, make twenty-seven in all. To these, how many whites am I to add? You counted them also?"

The Indian showed both hands with all the fingers extended, repeating the gesture four times; then he showed one hand entire, and two fingers on the other.

"Forty-seven. Add these to the redskins, and we get seventy-four for the total. I had supposed them rather stronger than this, Wyandotte?"

"No stronger—no weaker—just so. Good many ole womans, too, among pale faces."

"Old women! You are not speaking literally, Nick? All that I have seen appear to be men."

"Got beard; but ole women, too. Talk—talk—talk—do not'in'. Dat what Injun call ole woman. Party, poor party; cap'in beat 'em, if he fight like ole time."

"Well, this is encouraging, Wilhelmina, and Nick seems to be dealing fairly with us."

"Now, inquire more about Robert, Hugh"—said the wife, in whose maternal heart her children were always uppermost.

"You hear, Nick; my wife is desirous of learning something about her son, next."

During the preceding dialogue, there had been something equivocal in the expression of the Indian's face. Every word he uttered about the party, its numbers, and his own manner of falling in with it, was true, and his countenance indicated that he was dealing fairly. Still, the captain fancied that he could detect a covert fierceness in his eye and air, and he felt uneasiness even while he yielded him credence. As soon as Mrs. Willoughby, however, interposed, the gleam of ferocity that passed so naturally and readily athwart the swarthy features of the savage, melted into a look of gentleness, and there were moments when it might be almost termed softness.

"Good to have moder"—said Nick, kindly. "Wyandotte got no squaw—wife dead, moder dead, sister dead—all gone to land of spirits—by'm bye, chief follow. No one throw stone on his grave! Been on death-path long ago, but cap'in's squaw say 'Stop, Nick; little too soon, now; take medicine, and get well.' Squaw made to do good. Chief alway like 'e squaw when his mind not wild with war."

"And your mind, Wyandotte, is not wild with war now," answered Mrs. Willoughby earnestly. "You will help a mother, then, to get her son out of the hands of merciless enemies?"

"Why you t'ink merciless? Because pale face dress like Injin, and try to cheat?"

"That may be one reason; but I fear there are many others. Tell me, Wyandotte, how came you to discover that Robert was a prisoner, and by what means did he contrive to give you his letter?"

The Indian assumed a look of pride, a little blended with hauteur; for he felt that he was manifesting the superiority of a red man over the pale face, as he related the means through which he had made his discoveries.

"Read book on ground," Nick answered gravely. "Two book alway open before chief; one in sky, t'other on ground. Book in sky tell weather—snow, rain, wind, thunder, lightning, war—book on ground tell what happen."

"And what had this book on the ground to do with my son, Wyandotte?"

"Tell all about him. Major's trail first seen at mill. No moccasin—much boot. Soldier boot like letter—say great deal in few word. First t'ink it cap'in; but it too short. Den know it major.

"This sounds very well, Nick," interrupted the captain, "though you will excuse me if I say it is going a little too far. It seems impossible that you should know that the print of the foot was that of my son. How could you be certain of this?"

"How could, eh? Who follow trail from house here, to Hudson River? T'ink Nick blind, and can't see? Tuscarora read his book as well as pale-face read Bible." Here Nick looked round him a moment, raised his fore-finger, dropped his voice, and added earnestly—"see him at Bunker Hill—know him among ten, six, two thousand warrior. Know dat foot if meet him in Happy Hunting Ground."

"And why my son's foot in particular? The boot is often changed, can never be exactly like its predecessor, and one boot is so much like another, that to me the thing seems impossible. This account of the boot, Nick, makes me distrust your whole story."

"What distrust?" demanded the Indian like lightning.

"It means doubt, uncertainty—distrust."

"Don't believe, ha?"

"Yes, that is it, substantially. Don't more than half believe, perhaps, would be nearer to the mark."

"Why, ole soldier always distrust; squaw nebber? Ask moder—ha!—you t'ink Nick don't know son's trail—handsome trail, like young chief's?"

"I can readily believe Nick might recognize Bob's trail, Hugh"—expostulated Mrs. Willoughby. "He has a foot in a thousand—you may remember how every one was accustomed to speak of his beautiful foot, even when he was a boy. As a man I think it more remarkable."

"Aye, go on, Nick, in this way, and my wife will believe all you say. There is no distrust in a mother's partiality, certainly. You are an old courtier, and would make your way at St. James's."

"Major nebber tell about foot?" asked Nick, earnestly.

"I remember nothing; and had he spoken of any such thing, I must have heard it. But never mind the story, now; you saw the footprint and knew it for my son's. Did you ask to be admitted to his prison? or was your intercourse secret?"

"Wyandotte too wise to act like squaw or boy. See him, widout look. Talk, widout speak—hear, widout ear. Major write letter, Nick take him. All done by eye and hand; not'in done by tongue, or at Council fire. Mohawk blind like owl."

"May I believe you, Tuscarora; or, incited by demons, do you come to deceive me?"

"Ole warrior look two time before he go; t'ink ten time before he say, yes. All good. Nick no affronted. Do so himself, and t'ink it right. Cap'in may believe all Nick say."

"Father!" cried Maud, with simple energy, "I will answer for the Indian's honesty. He has guided Robert so often, and been with him in so many trying scenes, he never can have the heart to betray him or us. Trust him, then, he may be of infinite service."

Even Captain Willoughby, little disposed as he was to judge Nick favorably, was struck with the gleam of manly kindness that shot across the dark face of the Indian, as he gazed at the glowing cheek and illuminated countenance of the ardent and beautiful girl.

"Nick seems disposed to make a truce with you, at least, Maud," he said, smiling, "and I shall now know where to look for a mediator, whenever any trouble arises between us."

"I have known Wyandotte, dear sir, from childhood, and he has ever been my friend. He promised me, in particular, to be true to Bob, and I am happy to say he has ever kept his word."

This was telling but half the story. Maud had made the Indian many presents, and most especially had she attended to his wants, when it was known he was to be the major's guide, the year previously, on his return to Boston. Nick had known her real father, and was present at his death. He was consequently acquainted with her actual position in the family of the Hutted Knoll; and what was of far more consequence in present emergencies, he had fathomed the depths of her heart, in a way our heroine could hardly be said to have done herself. Off her guard with such a being, Maud's solicitude, however, had betrayed her, and the penetrating Tuscarora had discerned that which had escaped the observation of father, and mother, and sister. Had Nick been a paleface, of the class of those with whom he usually associated, his discovery would have gone through the settlement, with scoffings and exaggerations; but this forest gentleman, for such was Wyandotte, in spite of his degradation and numerous failings, had too much consideration to make a woman's affections the subject of his coarseness and merriment. The secret of Maud would not have been more sacred with her own brother, had such a relative existed to become her confidant, than it was with Saucy Nick.

"Nick gal's friend," observed the Indian, quietly; "dat enough; what Nick say, Nick mean. What Nick mean, he do. Come, cap'in; time to quit squaw, and talk about war."

At this hint, which was too plain to be misunderstood, Captain Willoughby bade the Indian withdraw to the court, promising to follow him, as soon as he could hold a short conference with Joyce, who was now summoned to the council. The subject of discussion was the manner in which the Tuscarora had passed the stockade, and the probabilty of his being true. The sergeant was disposed to mistrust all redmen, and he advised putting Nick under

arrest, and to keep him in durance, until the return of light at least.

"I might almost say, your honor, that such are orders, sir. The advice to soldiers carrying on war with savages tells us that the best course is to pay off treachery with treachery; and treachery is a redskin's manual exercise. There is O'Hearn will make a capital sentinel, for the fellow is as true as the best steel in the army. Mr. Woods's room is empty, and it is so far out of the way that nothing will be easier than to keep the savage snug enough. Besides, by a little management, he might fancy we were doing him honor all the while!"

"We will see, sergeant," answered the captain. "It has a bad appearance, and yet it may be the wisest thing we can do. Let us go the rounds first, taking Nick with us for safety, and determine afterward."

CHAPTER XX.

"His hand was stayed—he knew not why;
'Twas a presence breathed around—
A pleading from the deep blue sky,
And up from the teeming ground.
It told of the care that lavished had
In sunshine and in dew—
Of the many things that had wrought a screen
When peril round it grew."—MRS. SEBA SMITH.

THE desertions gave not only the captain, but his great support and auxiliary, the sergeant, the gravest apprehensions. A disposition of that nature is always contagious, men abandoning a failing cause much as rats are known to quit a sinking ship. It is not a matter of surprise, therefore, that the distrust which accompanied the unexpected appearance of the Tuscarora, became associated with this falling off in the loyalty of the garrison, in the minds of the two old soldiers.

"I do think, your honor," said Joyce, as they entered the court together, "that we may depend on O'Hearn, and Jamie and Strides. The latter, as a matter of course, being a corporal, or sergeant as he calls himself; and the two first, as men who have no ties but such as would be likely to keep them true to this family. But here is the corporal to speak for himself."

As this was said, Corporal Strides, as the sergeant persisted in terming Joel, on the ground that being but one step higher himself, the overseer could justly claim no rank of greater pretension, approached the captain, taking care to make the military salute which Joyce had never succeeded before in extracting from him, notwithstanding a hundred admonitions on the subject.

"This is a distressing affair, Captain Willoughby," observed Joel, in his most Jesuitical manner; "and to me it is altogether unaccountable? It does seem to me ag'in natur,' for a man to desert his own household and hum" (Joel meant "home") "in the hour of trial. If a fellow-being wunt" (Anglice "won't") "stand by his wife and children, he can hardly be expected to do any of his duties."

"Quite true, Strides," answered the confiding captain, "though these deserters are not altogether as bad as you represent, since you will remember they have carried their wives and children with them."

"I believe they have, sir—yes, that must be allowed to be true, and that it is which to me seems the most extr'or'nary. The very men that a person would calcilate on the most, or the heads of families, have desarted, while them that remain behind are mostly single!"

"If we single men have no wives and children of our own to fight for, Strides," observed Joyce with a little stiffness, "We have the wife and children of Captain Willoughby; no man who wishes to sell his life dearly need look for a better motive."

"Thank you, sergeant," the captain said feelingly. "On you I can rely as on myself. So long as I have you and Joel here, and Mike and the blacks, and the rest of the brave fellows who have stood by me thus far, I shall not despair. We can make good the house against ten times our own number. But it is time to look to the Indians."

"I was going to speak to the captain about Nick," put in Joel, who had listened to the eulogium on his own fidelity with some qualms of conscience. "I can't say I like the manner he has passed between

the two parties; and that fellow has always seemed to me as if he owed the captain a mortal grudge; when an Injin does owe a grudge he is pretty sartin to pay it in full."

"This has passed over my mind, too, I will confess, Joel; yet Nick and I have been on reasonably good terms, when one comes to remember his character on the one side, and the fact that I have commanded a frontier garrison on the other. If I have had occasion to flog him a few times, I have also had occasion to give him more rum than has done him good, with now and then a dollar."

"There I think the captain miscalculates," observed Joel, with a knowledge of human nature that would have been creditable to him, had he practiced it on himself. "No man is thankful for rum when the craving is off, sin' he knows he has been taking an inimy into his stomach; and as for the money, it was much the same as giving the liquor, seein' that it went for liquor as soon as he could trot down to the mill. A man will seek his revenge for rum as soon as for anything else, when he gets to feel injuries uppermost. Beside, I s'pose the captain knows an injury will be remembered long a'ter a favor is forgotten."

"This may be true, Strides, and certainly I shall keep my eyes on the Indian. Can you mention any particular act that excites your suspicion?"

"Don't the captain think Nick may have had suthin' to do with the desartions? A dozen men would scarce desart all at once, as it might be, onless some one was at the bottom of it."

This was true enough, certainly, though Joel chose to keep out of view all his own machinations and arts on the subject. The captain was struck by the suggestion, and he determined to put his first intention in respect to Nick in force immediately. Still it was necessary to proceed with caution, the state of the Hut rendering a proper watch and a suitable prison difficult to be obtained. These circumstances were mentioned to the overseer, who led the way to the part of the building occupied by his own family; and throwing open the doors, ostentatiously exhibited Phœbe and her children in their customary beds, at a moment when so many others had proved recreant. His professed object was to offer a small closet in his own rooms as a prison for Nick, remarking he must be an ingenious savage, indeed, if he could escape the vigilance of so many watchful eyes as would then be on him.

"I believe you, Strides," said the captain, smiling as he walked away from the place; "if he can escape Phœbe and her children the fellow must be made of quicksilver. Still, I have a better prison in view. I am glad to see this proof, however, of your own fidelity, by finding all your family in their beds; for those are not wanting who would have me suspect even you."

"Me! Well, if the captain can't count on his own overseer, I should like to ask such persons on whom he can count? Madame Willoughby and the young ladies isn't more likely to remain true than I am myself, I should think. What in reason, or natur', or all lawful objects, could make me—"

Joel was about to run into that excess of vindication that is a little apt to mark guilt; but the captain cut him short by telling him it was unnecessary, recommending vigilance, and walking away in search of Nick.

The Indian was found standing beneath the arch of the gateway, upright, motionless, and patient. A lantern was kept burning here, the place being used as a sort of guardhouse, and by its light it was easy to perceive the state of the still unhung leaf of the passage. This leaf, however, was propped in its place by strong timbers, and on the whole many persons would think it the most secure half of the gate. Captain Willoughby observed that the Indian was studying this arrangement when he entered the place himself. The circumstance caused him uneasiness, and quickened his determination to secure the Indian.

"Well, Nick," he said, concealing his intention under an appearance of indifference, "you see our gates are well fastened,

and steady hands and quick eyes will do the rest. It is getting late, and I wish to have you comfortably lodged before I lie down myself. Follow me, and I will show you to a place where you will be at your ease."

The Tuscarora understood the captain's object the instant he spoke of giving him comfortable lodgings, a bed being a thing that was virtually unknown to his habits. But he raised no objections, quietly treading in the other's footsteps, until both were in the bed-room of the absent Mr. Woods. The apartments of the chaplain were above the library, and being in the part of the house that was fortified by the cliff, they had dormer windows that looked toward the forest. The height of these windows, the captain thought, would be a sufficient security against flight; and by setting Mike and one of the Plinies on the lookout, to relieve each other at intervals of four hours, he thought the Tuscarora might be kept until the return of light. The hour when he most apprehended danger was that which just precedes the day, sleep then pressing the heaviest on the sentinel's eyelids, and rest having refreshed the assailants.

"Here, Wyandotte, I intend you shall pass the night," said the captain, assuming as much courtesy of manner as if he were doing the honors of the house to an invited and honored guest. "I know you despise a bed, but there are blankets, and by spreading them on the floor, you can make your own arrangements."

Nick made a gesture of assent, looking cautiously around him, carefully avoiding every appearance of curiosity at the same time, more in pride of character, however, than in cunning. Nevertheless he took in the history of the locality at a glance.

"It is well," he said; "a Tuscarora chief no t'ink of sleep. Sleep come standing, walking, where he will, when he will. Dog eats, den lie down to sleep; warrior always ready. Good-by, cap'in—to-morrow see him ag'in."

"Good night, Nick. I have ordered your old friend Mike, the Irishman, to come and sit in your room, lest you might want something in the night. You are good friends with Mike, I believe; I chose him on that account."

The Indian understood this, too; but not an angry gleam, no smile, nor any other sign betrayed his consciousness of the captain's motives.

"Mike good," he answered, with emphasis. "Long tongue—short t'ink. Say much, mean little. Heart sound, like hard oak—mind like spunk—burn quickly; no too much strong."

This sententious and accurate delineation of the County Leitrim-man's characteristics induced a smile in the captain; but O'Hearn entering at the moment, and possessing his entire confidence, he saw no use in replying. In another minute the two worthies were left in possession of the bedroom, Michael having received a most solemn injunction not to be tempted to drink.

It was now so late the captain determined to let the regular watches of the night take their course. He held a short consultation with Joyce, who took the first ward, and then threw himself on a mattress in his clothes, his affectionate wife having done the same thing, by the side of her daughters and grandson, in an adjoining room. In a short time the sounds of footsteps ceased in the Hut, and one unacquainted with the real state of the household might have fancied that the peace and security of one of its ancient midnights were reigning about the Knoll.

It was just two in the morning, when the sergeant tapped lightly at the door of his commanding officer's room. The touch was sufficient to bring the captain to his feet, and he instantly demanded the news.

"Nothing but sentry go, your honor," replied Joyce. "I am as fresh as a regiment that is just marching out of barracks, and can easily stand the guard till daylight. Still, as it was orders to call your honor at two, I could do no less, you know, sir."

"Very well, sergeant. I will just wash my eyes, and be with you in a minute. How has the night gone?"

"Famously quiet, sir. Not even an owl

to trouble it. The sentinels have kept their eyes wide open, dread of the scalping-knife being a good wakener, and no sign of any alarm has been seen. I will wait for your honor in the court, the moment of relieving guard being often chosen by a cunning enemy for the assault."

"Yes," sputtered the captain, his face just emerging from the water—"if he happen to know when that is."

In another minute the two old soldiers were together in the court, waiting the return of Jamie Allen with his report, the mason having been sent around to the beds of the fresh men to call the guard. It was not long, however, before the old man was seen hastening toward the spot where Joyce had bid him come.

"The Lord ha' mairey on us, and on a' wretched sinners!" exclaimed Jamie, as soon as near enough to be heard without raising his voice on too high a key—"there are just the beds of the three Connecticut lads that were to come into the laird's guard, as empty as a robin's nest, fra' which the yang ha' flown!"

"Do you mean, Jamie, that the boys have deserted?"

"It's just that; and no need of ca'ing it by anither name. The Hoose o'Hanover wad seem to have put the de'il in a' the lads, women and children included, and to have raised up a spirit o' disaffection, that is fast leaving us to carry on this terrible warfare with our ain hearts and bodies."

"With your honor's permission," said the sergeant, "I would ask Corporal Allen if the deserters have gone off with their arms and accoutrements?"

"Airms? Ay, and legs, and a' belonging to 'em, with mair that is the lawful property of the laird. Not so much as a flint is left behind."

"Then we may count on seeing all the fellows in the enemy's ranks," the sergeant quietly remarked, helping himself to the tobacco from which he had refrained throughout the previous hours of the night, Joyce being too much of a martinet to smoke or chew on duty. "It's uphill work, your honor, when every deserter counts two, in this manner. The civil wars, however, are remarkable for this sort of wheeling, and facing to the right-about; the same man often changing his colors two or three times in a campaign."

Captain Willoughby received the news of this addition to his ill luck with an air of military stoicism, though he felt, in reality, more like a father and a husband on the occasion than like a hero. Accustomed to self-command, he succeeded in concealing the extent of his uneasiness, while he immediately set about inquiring into the extent of the evil.

"Joel is to join my watch," he said, "and he may throw some light on this affair. Let us call him at once; for a few minutes may prove of importance."

Even while speaking, the captain crossed the court, accompanied by the sergeant and mason; and, ceremony being little attended to on such occations, they all entered the quarters of Strides in a body. The place was empty! Man, woman, and children had abandoned the spot, seemingly in a body, and this, too, far from empty-handed. The manner in which the room had been stripped, indeed, was the first fact which induced the captain to believe that a man so much and so long trusted would desert him in a strait so serious. There could be no mistake; and, for a moment, the husband and father felt such a sinking of the heart as would be apt to follow the sudden conviction that his enemies must prevail.

"Let us look further, Joyce," he said, "and ascertain the extent of the evil at once."

"This is a very bad example, your honor, that Corporal Strides has set the men, and we may expect to hear of more desertions. A non-commissioned officer should have had too much pride for this! I have always remarked, sir, in the army, that when a non-commissioned officer left his colors, he was pretty certain to carry off a platoon with him."

The search justified this opinion of the sergeant. A complete examination of the quarters of all the men having been made, it was ascertained that every white man in the Hut, the sergeant, James Allen,

and a young New England laborer of the name of Blodget excepted, had abandoned the place. Every man had carried off with him his arms and ammunition, leaving the rooms as naked of defense as they had been before they were occupied. Women and children, too, were all gone, proving that the flights had been made deliberately, and with concert. This left the Hut to be defended by its owner, the sergeant, the two Plinies, and a young descendant of the same color, Jamie Allen, Blodget, and Mike, who had not yet been relieved from his ward over the Indian; eight men in all, who might possibly receive some assistance from the four black females in the kitchen.

The captain examined this small array of force, every man but Mike being up and in the line, with a saddened countenance; for he remembered what a different appearance it made only the previous day, when he had his gallant son, too, with him, a host in himself. It added mortification to regret, also, when he remembered that this great loss had been made without a single blow having been struck in defense of his precious family and his lawful rights.

"We must close the gate of the court, and bar it at once, Joyce," the captain said, as soon as fully apprised of the true state of his force. "It will be quite sufficient if we make good the house, with this handful of men; giving up all hope of doing anything with the stockade. It is the facility offered by the open gateway that has led to all this mischief."

"I don't know, your honor. When desertion once fairly gets into a man's mind, it's wonderful the means he will find to bring about his wishes. Corporal Strides, no doubt, has passed his family and his kit through both gates; for, being in authority, our people were hardly disciplined enough to understand the difference between a non-commissioned officer on guard and one off guard; but, there were a hundred ways to mischief, even had there been no gate. Jamie, take one of the blacks, and bar the inner gate. What is your honor's pleasure next?"

"I wish my mind were at ease on the subject of the Tuscarora. With Nick's assistance as a runner and spy, and even as a sharpshooter, we should be vastly stronger. See to the gate yourself, sergeant, then follow me to Mr. Woods's room."

This was done, the captain waiting for his companion on the threshold of the outer door. Ascending the narrow stairs, they were soon on the floor above, and were happy to find the door of the Tuscarora's prison fastened without, as they had left it; this precaution having been taken as a salutary assistance to O'Hearn's sagacity. Undoing these fastenings, the sergeant stepped aside to allow his superior to precede him, as became their respective stations. The captain advanced, holding the lantern before him, and found an empty room. Both Nick and Mike were gone, though it was not easy to discover by what means they had quitted the place. The door was secure, the windows were down, and the chimney was too small to allow of the passage of a human body. The defection of the Irishman caused the captain great pain, while it produced surprise even in the sergeant. Mike's fidelity had been thought of proof, and, for an instant, the master of the place was disposed to believe some evil spirit had been at work to corrupt his people.

"This is more than I could have expected, Joyce!" he said, as much in sorrow as in anger. "I should as soon have looked for the desertion of old Pliny as that of Mike!"

"It is extr'or'nary, sir; but one is never safe without in-and-in discipline. A drill a week, and that only for an hour or two of a Saturday afternoon, Captain Willoughby, may make a sort of country militia, but it will do nothing for the field. 'Talk of enlisting men for a year, Sergeant Joyce,' said old Colonel Flanker to me, one day in the last war—'why, it will take a year to teach a soldier how to eat. Your silly fellows in the provincial assemblies fancy because a man has teeth, and a stomach, and an appetite, that he knows how to eat; but eating is an art, sergeant, and military eating above all other

branches of it; and I maintain a soldier can no more learn how to eat,' as a soldier, the colonel meant, your honor, 'than he can learn to plan a campaign by going through the manual exercise.' For my part, Captain Willoughby, I have always thought it took a man his first five years' enlistment to learn how to obey orders."

"I had thought that Irishman's heart in the right place, Joyce, and counted as much on him as I did on you!"

"On me, Captain Willoughby!" answered the sergeant, in a tone of mortification. "I should think, your honor would have made some difference between your old orderly—a man who has served thirty years in your own regiment, and most of the time in your own company, and a bit of a wild Hibernian of only ten years' acquaintance, and he a man who never saw a battalion paraded for real service."

"I see my error now, Joyce; but Michael had so much blundering honesty about him, or seemed to have, that I have been his dupe. It is too late, however, to repine; the fellow is gone; it only remains to ascertain the manner of his flight. May not Joel have undone the fastenings of the door, and let him and the Indian escape together, in common with the rest of the deserters?"

"I secured that door, sir, with my own hands, in a military manner, and know that it was found as I left it. The Rev. Mr. Wood's bed seems to have been disturbed; perhaps that may furnish a clew."

A clew the bed did furnish, and it solved the problem. The bed-cord was removed, and both the sheets and one of the blankets were missing. This directed the inquiry to the windows, one of which was not closed entirely. A chimney stood near the side of this window, and by its aid it was not difficult to reach the ridge of the roof. On the inner side of the roof was the staging, or walk, already mentioned; and once on that, a person could make the circuit of the entire roof in perfect safety. Joyce mounted to the ridge, followed by the captain, and gained the staging with a little effort, whence they proceeded round the buildings to ascertain if the rope was not yet hanging over the exterior, as a means of descent. It was found as expected, and withdrawn lest it might be used to introduce enemies within the house.

These discoveries put the matter of Michael's delinquency at rest. He had clearly gone off with his prisoner, and might next be looked for in the ranks of the besiegers. The conviction of this truth gave the captain more than uneasiness; it caused him pain, for the County Leitrim-man had been a favorite with the whole family, and most especially with his daughter Maud.

"I do not think you and the blacks will leave me, Joyce," he observed, as the sergeant and himself descended by the common passage to the court. "On you I can rely, as I would rely on my noble son were he with me at this moment."

"I beg your honor's pardon—few words tell best for a man, deeds being his duty—but if your honor will have the condescension just to issue your orders, the manner in which they shall be obeyed will tell the whole story."

"I am satisfied of that, sergeant; we must put shoulder to shoulder, and die in the breach, should it be necessary, before we give up the place."

By this time the two old soldiers were again in the court, where they found all their remaining force of the male sex; the men being too uneasy, indeed, to think of going to their pallets until better assured of their safety. Captain Willoughby ordered Joyce to draw them up in line again, when he addressed them once more in person.

"My friends," the captain commenced, "there would be little use in attempting to conceal from you our real situation; nor would it be strictly honest. You see here every man on whom I can now depend for the defense of my fireside and family. Mike has gone with the rest, and the Indian has escaped in his company. You can make up your own opinions of our chances of success, but my resolution is formed. Before I open a gate to the merciless wretches without, who are worse than the

savages of the wilderness, possessing all their bad and none of their redeeming qualities, it is my determination to be buried under the ruins of this dwelling. But you are not bound to imitate my example; and if any among you, black or white, regrets being here at this moment, he shall still have arms and ammunition, and food given him, the gates shall be opened, and he may go freely to seek his safety in the forest. For God's sake, let there be no more desertions; he that wishes to quit me, may now quit me unmolested; but, after this moment, martial law will be enforced, and I shall give orders to shoot down any man detected in treachery, as I would shoot down a vicious dog."

This address was heard in profound silence. No man stirred, nor did any man speak.

"Blodget," continued the captain, "you have been with me a shorter time than any person present, and cannot feel the same attachment to me and mine as the rest. You are the only native American among us, Joyce excepted—for we count the blacks as nothing in respect to country—and may feel that I am an Englishman born, as I fear has been the case with the rest of my friends. Perhaps I ought not to ask you to remain. Take your arms, then, and make the best of your way to the settlements. Should you reach Albany, you might even serve me essentially by delivering a letter I will confide to you, and which will bring us effectual succor."

The young man did not answer, though his fingers worked on the barrel of his musket, and he shifted his weight from leg to leg like one whose inward feelings were moved.

"I believe I understand you, Captain Willoughby," he said at length, "though I think you don't understand me. I know you old country people think meanly of us new country people, but I suppose that's in the natur' of things; then, I allow Joel Strides's conduct has been such as to give you reason to judge us harshly. But there is a difference among us, as well as among the English; and some of us—I won't say I am such a man, but actions speak louder than words, and all will be known in the end—but some of us will be found true to our bargains, as well as other men."

"Bravely answered, my lad," cried the sergeant, heartily, and looking around at his commander with exultation, to congratulate him on having such a follower.

"This is a man who will obey orders through thick and thin, I'll answer for it, your honor. Little does he care who's king or who's governor, so long as he knows his captain and his corps."

"There you are mistaken, Sergeant Joyce," the youth observed firmly. "I'm for my country, and I'd quit this house in a minute did I believe Captain Willoughby meant to help the Crown. But I have lived long enough here to know he is at the most neutral; though I think he rather favors the side of the Colonies than that of the Crown."

"You have judged rightly, Blodget," observed the captain. "I do not quite like this Declaration of Independence, though I can scarce blame Congress for having made it. Of the two, I think the Americans nearest right, and I now conceive myself to be more of an American than an Englishman. I wish this to be understood, Joyce."

"Do you, sir? It's just as your honor pleases. I didn't know which side it was your pleasure to support, nor does it make any great difference with most of us. Orders are orders, let them come from king or colonies. I would take the liberty of recommending, your honor, that this young man be promoted. Strides's desertion has left a vacancy among the corporals, and we shall want another for the guard. It would hardly do to make a nigger a corporal."

"Very well, Joyce, have it as you wish," interrupted the captain, a little impatiently; for he perceived he had a spirit to deal with in Blodget that must hold such trifles at their true value. "Let it be Corporal Allen and Corporal Blodget in future."

"Do you hear, men? These are general orders. The relieved guard will fall out, and try to get a little sleep, as we shall

parade again half an hour before the day."

Alas! the relieved guard, like the relief itself, consisted of only two men, Corporal Blodget and Pliny the younger; old Pliny, in virtue of his household work, being rated as an idler. These five, with the captain and the sergeant, made the number of the garrison seven, which was the whole male force that now remained.

Captain Willoughby directed Joyce and his two companions to go to their pallets, notwithstanding, assuming the charge of the lookout himself, and profiting by the occasion to make himself better acquainted with the character of his new corporal than circumstances had hitherto permitted.

CHAPTER XXI.

"For thee they fought, for thee they fell,
And their oath was on thee laid;
To thee the clarions raised their swell,
And the dying warriors prayed."
—PERCIVAL.

THE distaste for each other which existed between the people of New England and those of the adjoining colonies, anterior to the war of the Revolution, is a matter of history. It was this feeling that threw Schuyler, one of the ablest and best men in the service of his country, into the shade, a year later than the period of which we are writing. This feeling was very naturally produced, and, under the circumstances, was quite likely to be active in a revolution. Although New England and New York were contiguous territories, a wide difference existed between their social conditions. Out of the larger towns there could scarcely be said to be a gentry at all in the former; while the latter, a conquered province, had received the framework of the English system, possessing Lords of the Manor, and divers other of the fragments of the feudal system. So great was the social equality throughout the interior of the New England provinces, indeed, as almost to remove the commoner distinctions of civilized associations, bringing all classes surprisingly near the same level, with the exceptions of the very low, or some rare instance of an individual who was raised above his neighbors by unusual wealth, aided perhaps by the accidents of birth, and the advantages of education.

The results of such a state of society are easily traced. Habit had taken the place of principles, and a people accustomed to see even questions of domestic discipline referred either to the church or to public sentiment, and who knew few or none of the ordinary distinctions of social intercourse, submitted to the usages of other conditions of society with singular distaste and stubborn reluctance. The native of New England deferred singularly to great wealth in 1776, as he is known to defer to it to-day; but it was opposed to all his habits and prejudices to defer to social station. Unused to intercourse with what was then called the great world of the provinces, he knew not how to appreciate its manners or opinions; and, as is usual with the provincial, he affected to despise that which he neither practiced nor understood. This at once indisposed him to acknowledge the distinctions of classes; and when accident threw him in the adjoining province, he became marked, at once, for decrying the usages he encountered, comparing them with singular self-felicitation to those he had left behind him; sometimes with justice beyond a doubt, but oftener in provincial ignorance and narrow bigotry.

A similar state of things on a larger scale has been witnessed more especially in Western New York, since the peace of '83; the great inroads of emigrants from the New England states having almost converted that district of country into an eastern colony. Men of the world, while they admit how much has been gained in activity, available intelligence of the practical school, and enterprise, regret that the fusion has been quite so rapid and so complete; it being apparently a law of nature that nothing precious that comes of man shall be enjoyed altogether without alloy.

The condition in which Captain Willoughby was now placed, might have been traced to causes connected with the feel-

ings and habits above alluded to. It was distasteful to Joel Strides, and one or two of his associates, to see a social chasm as wide as that which actually existed between the family of the proprietor of the Knoll and his own, growing no narrower; and an active cupidity, with the hopes of confiscations, or an abandonment of the estate, came in aid of this rankling jealousy of station—the most uneasy, as it is the meanest, of all our vices. Utterly incapable of appreciating the width of that void which separates the gentleman from the man of coarse feelings and illiterate vulgarity, he began to preach that doctrine of exaggerated and mistaken equality which says "one man is as good as another," a doctrine that is nowhere engrafted even on the most democratic of our institutions of to-day, since it would totally supersede the elections, and leave us to draw lots for public trust as men are drawn for juries. On ordinary occasions, the malignant machinations of Strides would probably have led to no results; but, aided by the opinions and temper of the times, he had no great difficulty in undermining his master's popularity, by incessant and well-digested appeals to the envy and cupidity of his companions. The probity, liberality, and manly sincerity of Captain Willoughby often counteracted his schemes, it is true; but as even the stone yields to constant attrition, so did Joel finally succeed in overcoming the influence of these high qualities, by dint of perseverance and cunning, not a little aided by certain auxiliaries freely obtained from the Father of Lies.

As our tale proceeds, Joel's connection with the late movement will become more apparent, and we prefer leaving the remainder of the explanations to take their proper places in the course of the narrative.

Joyce was so completely a matter of drill, that he was in a sound sleep three minutes after he had lain down, the negro who belonged to his guard imitating his industry in this particular with equal coolness. As for the thoughtful Scotchman, Jamie Allen, sleep and he were strangers that night. To own the truth, the disaffection of Mike not only surprised, but it disappointed him. He remained in the court, therefore, conversing on the subject with the "laird," after his companions had fallen asleep.

"I wad na ha'e thought that o' Michael," he said; "for the man had an honest way with him, and was so seeming valiant, that I could na ha'e supposed him capable of proving a desairter. Mony's the time that I've heard him swear—for Michael was an awfu' hand at that vice, when his betters were no near to rebuke him—but often has he swore that madam, and her winsome daughters, were the pride of his een. Ay, and their delight too!"

"The poor fellow has yielded to my unlucky fortune, Jamie," returned the captain, "and I sometimes think it were better had you all imitated his example."

"Begging pardon, Captain Willoughby, for the familiarity, but yo're just wrang, fra' beginning to end, in the supposition. No man with a hairt in his body wad desairt ye in a time like this, and no mair's to be said in the matter. Nor do I think that luuk has had anything to do with Michael's deficiency, unless ye ca' it luuk to be born and educated in a misguided religion. Michael's Catholicity is at the bottom of his backsliding, ye'll find, if ye look closely into the maiter."

"I do not see how that is to be made out, Allen; all sects of the Christian religion, I believe, teaching us to abide by our engagements, and to perform our duties."

"Na doubt—na doubt, 'Squire Willoughy—there's a seeming desire to teach as much in a' churches; but ye'll no deny that the creatur' o' Rome wears a mask, and that Catholicity is, at the best, but a wicked feature to enter into the worship of God."

"Catholicism, Jamie, means adherence to the Catholic Church—"

"Just that—just that"—interrupted the Scot, eagerly—"and it's that o' which I complain. All Protestants—wather fully disposed, or ainly half disposed, as may be the case with the English kirk—all Protestants agree in condemning the very word catholic, which is a sign and a symbol o' the foul woman o' Babylon."

"Then, Jamie, they agree in condemning what they don't understand. I should be sorry to think I am not a member of the Catholic Church myself."

"Yersal'! No, Captain Willoughby, ye're no Catholic, though you are a bit akin to it, perhaps. I know that Mr. Woods, that's now in the hands o' the savages, prays for the Catholics, and professes to believe in what he ca's the 'Holy Catholic Kirk'; but then I've always supposed that was in the way o' Christian charity like; for one is obleeged to use decent language, ye'll be acknowledging, sir, in the pulpit, if it's only for appearance' sake."

"Well—well—Jamie; a more fitting occasion may occur for discussing matters of this nature, and we will postpone the subject to another time. I may have need of your services an hour or two hence, and it will be well for every man to come to the work fresh and clear-headed. Go to your pallet then, and expect an early call."

The mason was not a man to oppose such an order coming from the "laird"; and he withdrew, leaving the captain standing in the center of the court quite alone. We say alone; for young Blodget had ascended to the gallery or staging that led around the inner sides of the roofs, while the negro on guard was stationed at the gateway, as the only point where the Hut could be possibly carried by a coup-de-main. As the first of these positions commanded the best exterior view from the inside of the buildings, the captain mounted the stairs he had so recently descended, and joined the young Rhode Islander at his post.

The night was starlight, but the elevation at which the two watchers were placed was unfavorable to catching glimpses of any lurking enemy. The height confounded objects with the ground on which they were placed, though Blodget told the captain he did not think a man could cross the palisades without his being seen. By moving along the staging on the southern side of the quadrangle, he could keep a tolerable lookout on the front and two flanks, at the same time. Still, this duty could not be performed without considerable risk, as the head and shoulders of a man moving along the ridge of the building would be almost certain to attract the eye of an Indian without. This was the first circumstance that the captain remarked on joining his companion, and gratitude induced him to point it out, in order that the other might, in a degree at least, avoid the danger.

"I suppose, Blodget, this is your first service," said Captain Willoughby, "and it is not easy to impress on a young man the importance of unceasing vigilance against savage artifices."

"I admit the truth of all you say, sir," answered Blodget, "though I do not believe any attempt will be made on the house until the other side has sent in what the sergeant calls another flag."

"What reason have you for supposing this?" asked the captain, in a little surprise.

"It seems unreasonable for men to risk their lives when an easier way to conquest may seem open to them. That is all I meant, Captain Willoughby."

"I believe I understand you, Blodget. You think that Joel and his friends have succeeded so well in drawing off my men, that they may be inclined to wait a little, in order to ascertain if further advantages may not be obtained in the same way."

Blodget confessed that he had some such thoughts in his mind, while, at the same time, he declared that he believed the disaffection would go no further.

"It is not easy for it to do so," returned the captain, smiling a little bitterly, as he remembered how many who had eaten of his bread, and had been cared for by him in sickness and adversity, had deserted him in his need, "unless they persuade my wife and daughters to follow those who have led the way."

Respect kept Blodget silent for a minute; then uneasiness induced him to speak.

"I hope Captain Willoughby don't distrust any who now remain with him," he said. "If so, I know I must be the person."

"Why you in particular, young man? With you, surely, I have every reason to be satisfied."

"It cannot be Sergeant Joyce, for he will stay until he gets your orders to march," the youth replied, not altogether without humor in his manner; "and as for the Scotchman, he is old, and men of his years are not apt to wait so long, if they intend to be traitors. The negroes all love you as if you were their father, and there is no one but me left to betray you."

"I thank you for this short enumeration of my strength, Blodget, since it gives me new assurance of my people's fidelity. You I will not distrust; the others I cannot, and there is a feeling of high confidence—What do you see—why do you lower your piece and stand at guard in this manner?"

"That is a man's form, sir, on the right of the gate, trying to climb the palisades. I have had my eye on him for some time, and I feel sure of my aim."

"Hold on an instant, Blodget; let us be certain before we act."

The young man lowered the butt of his piece, waiting patiently and calmly for his superior to decide. There was a human form visible, sure enough, and it was seen slowly and cautiously rising until it reached the summit of the stockade, where it appeared to pause to reconnoiter. Whether it were a pale-face or a red-skin it was impossible to distinguish, though the whole movement left little doubt that an assailant or a spy was attempting to pass the outer defenses.

"We cannot spare that fellow," said the captain, with a little regret in his manner; "it is more than we can afford. You must bring him down, Blodget. The instant you have fired, come to the other end of the stage, where we will watch the result."

This arranged, the captain prudently passed away from the spot, turning to note the proceedings of his companion, the moment he was at the opposite end of the gallery. Blodget was in no haste. He waited until his aim was certain; then the stillness of the valley was rudely broken by the sharp report of a rifle, and a flash illumined its obscurity. The figure fell outward, like a bird shot from its perch, lying in a ball at the foot of the stockade. Still, no cry or groan gave evidence of nature surprised by keen and unexpected anguish. At the next instant Blodget was by Captain Willoughby's side. His conduct was a pledge of fidelity that could not be mistaken, and a warm squeeze of the hand assured the youth of his superior's approbation.

It was necessary to be cautious, however, and to watch the result with ceaseless vigilance. Joyce and the men below had taken the alarm, and the sergeant and his companions were ordered upon the stage immediately, leaving the negro alone to watch the gate. A message was also sent to the females to give them confidence, and particularly to direct the blacks to arm, and to repair to the loops.

All this was done without confusion, and with so little noise as to prevent those without from understanding what was in progress. Terror kept the negroes silent, and discipline the others. As every one had lain down in his or her clothes, it was not a minute before every being in the Hut was up and in motion. It is unnecessary to speak of the mental prayers and conflicting emotions with which Mrs. Willoughby and her daughters prepared themselves for the struggle; and yet even the beautiful and delicate Maud braced her nerves to meet the emergency of a frontier assault. As for Beulah, gentle, peaceful, and forgiving as she was by nature, the care of little Evert aroused all the mother within her, and something like a frown that betokened resolution was, for a novelty, seen on her usually placid face.

A moment sufficed to let Joyce and his companions into the state of affairs. There now being four armed men on the stage, one took each of the three exposed sides of the building to watch, leaving the master of the house to move from post to post, to listen to suggestions, hear reports, and communicate orders.

The dark object that lay at the foot of the palisades was pointed out to the sergeant the instant he was on the stage, and one of his offices was to observe it, in order to ascertain if it moved, or

whether any attempts were made to carry off the body. The American Indians attach all the glory or shame of a battle to the acquisition or loss of scalps, and one of their practices was to remove those who had fallen, at every hazard, in order to escape the customary mutilation. Some tribes even believed it disgrace to suffer a dead body to be struck by the enemy, and many a warrior has lost his life in the effort to save the senseless corpse of a comrade from this fancied degradation.

As soon as the little stir created in the Hut by the mustering of the men was over, a stillness as profound as that which had preceded the alarm reigned around the place. No noise came from the direction of the mill; no cry, or call, or signal of battle was heard; everything lay in the quiet of midnight. Half an hour thus passed, when the streak of light that appeared in the east announced the approach of day.

The twenty minutes that succeeded were filled with intense anxiety. The slow approach of light gradually brought out object after object in the little panorama, awakening and removing alike, conjectures and apprehensions. At first the gray of the palisades became visible; then the chapel, in its somber outlines; the skirts of the woods; the different cabins that lined them; the cattle in the fields, and the scattering trees. As for Joyce, he kept his gaze fastened on the object at the foot of the stockade, expecting every instant there would be an attempt to carry it off.

At length the light became so strong as to allow the eye to take in the entire surface of the natural glacis without the defenses, bringing the assurance that no enemy was near. As the ground was perfectly clear, a few fruit-trees and shrubs on the lawn excepted, and by changing positions on the stage, these last could now be examined on all sides, nothing was easier than to make certain of this fact. The fences, too, were light and open, rendering it impossible for any ambush or advancing party to shelter itself behind them. In a word, daylight brought the comfortable assurance to those within the palisades that another night was passed without bringing an assault.

"We shall escape this morning, I do believe, Joyce," said the captain, who had laid down his rifle, and no longer felt it necessary to keep the upper portions of his body concealed behind the roof—"Nothing can be seen that denotes intention to attack, and not an enemy is near."

"I will take one more thorough look, your honor," answered the sergeant, mounting to the ridge of the building, where he obtained the immaterial advantage of seeing more at the same time, at the risk of exposing his whole person, should any hostile rifle be in reach of a bullet, "then we may be certain."

Joyce was a man who stood just six feet in his stockings; and, losing no part of his stature by his setting up, a better object for a sharp-shooter could not have been presented than he now offered. The crack of a rifle soon saluted the ears of the garrison; then followed the whizzing of the bullet as it came humming through the air toward the Hut. But the report was so distant as at once to announce that the piece was discharged from the margin of the forest; a certain evidence of two important facts; one, that the enemy had fallen back to a cover; the other, that the house was narrowly watched.

Nothing tries the nerves of a young soldier more than the whizzing of a distant fire. The slower a bullet or a shot approaches, the more noise it makes; and, the sound continuing longer than is generally supposed, the uninitiated are apt to imagine that the dangerous missile is traveling on an errand directly toward themselves. Space appears annihilated, and raw hands are often seen to duck at a round shot that is possibly flying a hundred yards from them.

On the prosent occasion, the younger Pliny fairly squatted below the roof; Jamie thought it prudent to put some of his own masonry, which was favorably placed in an adjacent chimney for such a purpose, between him and the spot whence the report proceeded; while even Blodget

looked up into the air, as if he expected to see where the bullet was going. Captain Willoughby had no thought of the missile; he was looking for the smoke in the skirts of the woods, to note the spot; while Joyce, with folded arms, stood at rest on the ridge, actually examining the valley in another direction, certain that a fire so distant could not be very dangerous.

Jamie's calculation proved a good one. The bullet struck against the chimney, indented a brick, and fell upon the shingles of the roof. Joyce descended at the next instant, and he coolly picked up, and kept tossing the flattened bit of lead in his hand, for the next minute or two, with the air of a man who seemed unconscious of having it at all.

"The enemy is besieging us, your honor," said Joyce, "but he will not attack us at present. If I might presume to advise, we shall do well to leave a single sentinel on this stage, since no one can approach the palisades without being seen, if the man keeps in motion."

"I was thinking of this myself, sergeant; we will first post Blodget here. We can trust him, and as the day advances, a less intelligent sentinel will answer. At the same time, he must be instructed to keep an eye on the rear of the Hut, danger often coming from the quarter least expected."

All this was done and the remainder of the men descended to the court. Captain Willoughby ordered the gate unbarred, when he passed outside, taking the direction toward the lifeless body, which still lay where it had fallen, at the foot of the stockades. He was accompanied by Joyce and Jamie Allen, the latter carrying a spade, it being the intention to inter the savage as the shortest means of getting rid of a disagreable object. Our two old soldiers had none of the sensitiveness on the subject of exposure that is so apt to disturb the tyro in the art of war. With sentinels properly posted, they had no apprehension of dangers that did not exist, and they moved with confidence and steadily wherever duty called. Not only was the inner gate opened and passed, but the outer also, the simple precaution of stationing a man at the first being the only safeguard taken.

When outside of the palisades the captain and his companions proceeded at once toward the body. It was now sunrise, and a rich light was illuminating the hill-tops, though the direct rays of the luminary had not yet descended to the valley. There lay the Indian precisely as he had fallen, no warrior having interposed to save him from the scalping-knife. His head had reached the earth first, and the legs and body were tumbled on it, in a manner to render the form a confused pile of legs and blanket, rather than a bold savage stretched in the repose of death.

"Poor fellow!" exclaimed the captain, as the three approached the spot; "it is to be hoped Blodget's bullet did its commission faithfully, else the fall must have hurt him sadly."

"By Jove, 'tis nothing but a stuffed soldier!" cried Joyce, rolling the ingeniously contrived bundle over with his foot; "and here the lad's ball has passed directly through his head! This is Injin deviltry, sir; and has been tried in order to see whether our sentinels were or were not asleep."

"To me, Joyce, it seems more like a white man's clumsiness. The fellow has been made to resemble an Indian, but people of our own color have had a hand in the affair."

"Well, sir, let that be as it may, it is lucky our youngster had so quick an eye, and so nimble a finger. See, your honor; here is the pole by which the effigy was raised to the top of the palisades, and here is the trail on the grass yet, by which his supporter has crept off. The fellow seems to have scrambled along in a hurry; his trail is as plain as that of a whole company."

The captain examined the marks left on the grass, and was of opinion that more than one man had been employed to set up the decoy figure, a circumstance that seemed probable in itself when the weight of the image and the danger of exposure were remembered. Let that be as it might, he was rejoiced, on reflection, that no one was hurt, and he still retained the

hope of being able to come to such an understanding with his invaders as to supersede the necessity of actual violence.

"At all events, your honor, I will carry the quaker in," said Joyce, tossing the stuffed figure on a shoulder. "He will do to man the quaker gun, at least, and may be of use in frightening some of the other side more than he has yet frightened us."

Captain Willoughby did not object, though he reminded Joyce that the desertions had probably put the enemy in possession of a minute statement of their defenses and force, including the history of the wooden gun. If Joel and his fellow delinquents had joined the party at the mill, the name, age, character, and spirit of every man remaining in the garrison were probably known to its leaders; and neither quakers nor paddies would count for much in opposing an assault.

The captain came within the gate of the palisades last, closing, barring, and locking it with his own hands, when all immediate apprehensions from the enemy ceased. He knew, certainly, that it would probably exceed his present means of resistance to withstand a vigorous assault; but on the other hand, he felt assured that Indians would never approach a stockade in open day, and expose themselves to the hazards of losing some fifteen or twenty of their numbers before they could carry the place. This was opposed to all their notions of war, neither honor nor advantage tempting them to adopt it. As for the first, agreeably to savage notions, glory was to be measured by the number of scalps taken and lost; and, counting all the women left in the Hut, there would not be heads enough to supply a sufficient number to prove an offset to those which would probably be lost in the assault.

All this did the captain discuss in a few words with the sergeant, when he proceeded to join his anxious and expecting wife and daughters.

"God has looked down upon us in mercy, and protected us this night," said the grateful Mrs. Willoughby, with streaming eyes, as she received and returned her husband's warm embrace. "We cannot be too thankful when we look at these dear girls, and our precious little Evert. If Robert were only with us now I should be entirely happy!"

"Such is human nature, my little Maud," answered the captain, drawing his darling toward himself and kissing her polished forehead. "The very thoughts of being in our actual strait would have made your mother as miserable as her worst enemy could wish—if, indeed, there be such a monster on earth as her enemy—and now she protests she is delighted because our throats were not all cut last night. We are safe enough for the day, I think, and not another night shall one of you pass in the Hut, if I can have my way. If there be such a thing as desertion, there is such a thing as evacuation also."

"Hugh! What can you—do you mean! Remember, we are surrounded by a wilderness."

"I know our position reasonably well, wife of mine, and intend to turn that knowledge to some account, God willing and aiding. I mean to place old Hugh Willoughby by the side of Xenophon and Washington, and let the world see what a man is capable of on a retreat, when he has such a wife, two such daughters, and a grandson like that, on his hands. As for Bob I would not have him here, on any account. The young dog would run away with half the glory."

The ladies were too delighted to find their father and husband in such spirits to be critical, and all soon after sat down to an early breakfast, to eat with what appetite they could.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Yet I well remember
The favors of these men: were they not mine?
Did they not sometimes cry, all hail! to me?
So Judas did to Christ: but he, in twelve
Found truth in all but one: I in twelve thousand
none." —RICHARD II.

THAT which Captain Willoughby had said in seeming pleasantry, he seriously

meditated. The idea of passing another night in the Hut, supported by only six men, with more than ten times that number besieging him, and with all the secrets of his defenses known, through the disaffection of his retainers, was to the last degree painful to him. Had his own life alone been at risk, military pride might have tempted him to remain; but his charge was far too precious to be exposed on account of consideration so vain.

No sooner, therefore, was the breakfast over, than the captain summoned Joyce to a consultation on the contemplated movement. The interview took place in the library, whither the sergeant repaired, on receiving his superior's orders. As to the party without, no apprehension was felt, so long as the sentinels were even moderately vigilant, and the day lasted.

"I suppose, sergeant," commenced Captain Willoughby, "a soldier of your experience is not to be taught what is the next resort of a commanding officer, when he finds himself unable to make good his ground against his enemy in front?"

"It is to retreat, your honor. The road that cannot be passed must be turned."

"You have judged rightly. It is now my intention to evacuate the Hut, and to try our luck on a march to the rear. A retreat, skillfully executed, is a creditable thing; and any step appears preferable to exposing the dear beings in the other room to the dangers of a night assault."

Joyce appeared struck with the suggestion; though, if one might have judged from the expression of his countenance, far from favorably. He reflected a moment ere he answered.

"Did your honor send for me," he then inquired, "to issue orders for this retreat, or was it your pleasure to hear anything I might have to say about it?"

"The last—I shall give no orders until I know your opinion of the measure."

"It is as much the duty of an inferior to speak his mind freely when he is called for an opinion, Captain Willoughby, as it is to obey in silence, when he gets nothing but orders. According to my views of the matter we shall do better to stand our ground, and try to make good the house against these vagabonds, than to trust to the woods."

"Of course you have your reasons for this opinion, Joyce."

"Certainly, your honor. In the first place, I suppose it to be against the rules of the art of war to evacuate a place that is well provisioned, without standing an assault. This we have not yet done. It is true, sir, that our ranks are thinned by desertions; but I never heard of a garrisoned town, or a garrisoned house, capitulating on account of a few deserters; and I take it, evacuation is only the next step before capitulation."

"But our desertions, Joyce, have not been few, but many. Three times as many have left us, if we include our other losses, as remain. It matters not whence the loss proceeds, so long as it is a loss."

"A retreat with women and baggage, is always a ticklish operation, your honor, especially if an enemy is pressing your rear! Then we have a wilderness before us, and the ladies could hardly hold out for so long a march as that from this place to the Mohawk; short of which river they will hardly be as safe as they are at present."

"I have had no such march in view, Joyce. You know there is a comfortable hut, only a mile from this very spot, on the mountain side, where we commenced a clearing for a sheep pasture only three summers since. The field is in rich grass; and could we once reach the cabin and manage to drive a cow or two up there, we might remain a month in security, As for provisions and clothes, we could carry enough on our backs to serve us all several weeks, especially if assisted by the cows."

"I am glad your honor has thought of this idea," said the sergeant, his face brightening as he listened; "it will be a beautiful operation to fall back on that position when we can hold out no longer in this. The want of some such arrangement has been my only objection to this post, Captain Willoughby; for we have always seemed to me, out here in the wilderness, like a regiment drawn up with a ravine or a swamp in its rear."

"I am glad to find you relishing the movement for any cause, sergeant. It is my intention at present to make the necessary arrangements to evacuate the Hut, while it is light; and as soon as it is dark to retreat by the gates, the palisades, and the rivulet—how now, Jamie? You look as if there was news to communicate?"

Jamie Allen, in truth, had entered at that instant in so much haste as to have overlooked the customary ceremony of sending in his name, or even of knocking.

"News!" repeated the mason, with a sort of wondering smile, "and it's just that I've come to bring. Wad ye think it, baith, gentlemen, that our people are in their ain cabins ag'in, boiling their pots, and frying their pork, a' the same as if the valley was in a state of tranquillity, and we so many lairds waiting for them to come and do our pleasure!"

"I do not understand you, Jamie—whom do you mean by 'our people?'"

"Sure, just the desairters; Joel, and the miller, and Michael, and the rest."

"And the cabins—and the pots—and the pork—it is gibberish to me."

"I hae what ye English ca' an aiccent, I know; but, in my judgment, Captain Willoughby, the words may be comprehended without a dictionary. It's just that Joel Strides, and Daniel the miller, and the rest of them that fleed the past night, have gane into their ain abodes, and have lighted their fires, and put over their pots and kettles, and set up their domestic habitudes, a' the same as if this Beaver Dam was ain o' the pairks o' Lonnon!"

"The devil they have! Should this be the case, sergeant, our sortie may be made at an earlier hour than that mentioned. I never will submit to such an insult."

Captain Willoughby was too much aroused to waste many words, and seizing his hat he proceeded forthwith to take a look for himself. The stage or gallery on the roof offering the best view, in a minute he and his two companions were on it.

"There, ye'll be seein' a smoke in Joel's habitation with your own een; and yon is anither, in the dwelling of his cousin Seth," said Jamie, pointing in the direction he named.

"Smoke there is, of a certainty; but the Indians may have lighted fires in the kitchen to do their own cooking. This looks like investing us, sergeant, rather more closely than the fellows have done before."

"I rather think not, your honor. Jamie is right, or my eyes do not know a man from a woman. That is certainly a female in the garden of Joel, and I'll engage it's Phœbe, pulling onions for his craving stomach, the scoundrel!"

Captain Willoughby never moved without his little glass, and it was soon leveled at the object mentioned.

"By Jupiter! you are right, Joyce," he cried. "It is Phœbe, though the hussy is coolly weeding, not culling the onions! Ay, and now I see Joel himself! The rascal is examining some hoes, with as much philosophy as if he were master of them and all near them. This is a most singular situation to be in!"

This last remark was altogether just. The situation of those in the Hut was now singular indeed. Further examination showed that every cabin had its tenant, no one of the party that remained within the palisades being a householder. By using the glass, and pointing it in succession at the different dwellings, the captain in due time detected the presence of nearly every one of the deserters. Not a man of them all in fact was missing—Mike alone excepted. There they were, with their wives and children, in quiet possession of their different habitations. Nor was this all; the business of the valley seemed as much on their minds as had been their practice for years. Cows were milked, the swine were fed, poultry was called and cared for, and each household was also making the customary preparations for the morning meal.

So absorbed was the captain with this extraordinary scene that he remained an hour on the staging watching the course of events. The breakfasts were soon over, having been later than common, and a

little hurried; then commenced the more important occupations of the day. A field was already half plowed, in preparation for a crop of winter grain; thither Joel himself proceeded, with the necessary cattle accompanied by the laborers who usually aided him in that particular branch of husbandry. Three plows were soon at work, with as much regularity and order as if nothing had occurred to disturb the tranquillity of the valley. The axes of the wood-choppers were next heard, coming out of the forest, cutting fuel for the approaching winter; and a half-finished ditch had its workmen also, who were soon busy casting up the soil and fashioning their trench. In a word, all the suspended toil was renewed with perfect system and order.

"This beats the devil himself, Joyce!" said the captain, after a half hour of total silence. "Here are all these fellows at work as coolly as if I had just given them their tasks, and twice as diligently. Their unusual industry is a bad symptom of itself!"

"Your honor will remark one circumstance. Not a rascal of them all comes within the fair range of a musket; for, as to throwing away ammunition at such distances, it would be clearly unmilitary, and might be altogether useless."

"I have half a mind to scatter them with a volley," said the captain, doubtingly. "Bullets would take effect among those plowmen, could they only be made to hit."

"And amang the cattle, too," observed the Scotsman, who had an eye on the more economical part of the movement, as well as on that which was military. A ball would slay a horse as well as a man in such a skairmish."

"This is true enough, Jamie; and it is not exactly the sort of warfare I could wish, to be firing at men who were so lately my friends. I do not see, Joyce, that the rascals have any arms with them!"

"Not a musket, sir. I noticed that when Joel first detailed his detachments. Can it be possible that the savages have retired?"

"Not they, else would Mr. Strides and his friends have gone with them. No, sergeant, there is a deep plan to lead us into some sort of ambush in this affair, and we will be on the lookout for them."

Joyce stood contemplating the scene for some time in profound silence, when he approached the captain formally, and made the usual military salute; a ceremony he had punctiliously observed, on all proper occasions, since the garrison might be said to be placed under martial law.

"If it's your honor's pleasure," he said, "I will detail a detachment, and go out and bring in two or three of these deserters; by which means we shall get into their secrets."

"A detachment, Joyce!" answered the captain, eyeing his surbordinate a little curiously. "What troops do you propose to tell off for the service?"

"Why, your honor, there's Corporal Allen and old Pliny off duty; I think the thing might be done with them, if your honor would have the condescension to order Corporal Blodget, with the two other blacks, to form as a supporting party, under the cover of one of the fences."

"A disposition of my force that would leave Captain Willoughby for a garrison! I thank you, sergeant, for your offer and gallantry, but prudence will not permit it. We may set down Strides and his companions as so many knaves, and—"

"That may ye!" cried Mike's well-known voice, from the scuttle that opened into the garrets, directly in front of which the two old soldiers were conversing; "that may ye, and no ha-r-rm done the trut', or justice, or for that matther, meself. Och! if I had me will of the blackguards, every rogue of 'em should be bound hand and fut and laid under that pratthy watherfall, yon at the mill, until his sins was washed out of him. Would there be confessions, then? That would there; and sich letting out of sacrets as would satisfy the conscience of a hog!"

By the time Mike had got through this sentiment, he was on the staging, where he stood hitching up his nether garment,

with a meaning grin on his face that gave a peculiar expression of heavy cunning to the massive jaw and capacious mouth, blended with an honesty and good nature that the well-meaning fellow was seldom without when he addressed any of the captain's family. Joyce glanced at the captain, expecting orders to sieze the returned runaway, but his superior read at once good faith in the expression of his old retainer's countenance.

"You have occasioned us a good deal of surprise, O'Hearn, on more accounts than one," observed the captain, who thought it prudent to assume more sternness of manner than his feelings might have actually warranted. "You have not only gone off yourself, but you have suffered your prisoner to escape with you. Then your manner of getting into the house requires an explanation. I shall hear what you have to say before I make up my mind as to your conduct."

"Is it spake I will? That will I, and as long as it plase yer honor to listen. Och! Isn't that Saucy Nick a quare one? Divil burn me if I think the likes of him is to be found in all Ameriky, full as it is of Injins and saucy fellies! Well, now, I suppose, sargeant, ye've set me down as sthriding off with Misther Joel and his likes, if ye was to open yer heart, and spake yer thrue mind?"

"You have been marked for a deserter, O'Hearn, and one, too, that deserted from post."

"Post! Had I been that I shouldn't have stirred, and ye'd be wanting in the news I bring ye from the majjor, and Mr. Woods, and the savages, and the rest of the varmints."

"My son! Is this possible, Michael? Have you seen him, or can you tell us anything of his state?"

Mike now assumed a manner of importance, laying a finger on his nose, and pointing toward the sentinel and Jamie.

"It's the sergeant that I considers as one of the family," said the County Leitrim-man, when his pantomime was through, "but it isn't dacent to be bawling out sacrets through a whole neighborhood; and then, as for Ould Nick—or saucy Nick, or whatever ye calls him—och? isn't he a pratthy Injin! ye'll mar-r-ch t'rough Ameriky and never see his aiquel!"

"This will never do, O'Hearn. Whatever you have to say must be said clearly, and in the simplest manner. Follow to the library, where I will hear your report. Joyce, you will accompany us."

"Let him come, if he wishes to hear wonderful achievements!" answered Mike, making way for the captain to descend the steps; then following himself, talking as he went. "He'll never brag of his campaigns ag'in to the likes of me, seeing that I've outdone him, ten—ay, forty times and boot. Och! that Nick's a divil, and no har-r-m said!"

"In the first place, O'Hearn," resumed the captain, as soon as the three were alone in the library—"you must explain your own desertion."

"Me! Desart! Sure, it isn't run away from yer honor, and the Missus, and Miss Beuly, and pratthy Miss Maud and the child, that yer honor's ma'aning?"

This was said with so much nature and truth, that the captain had not the heart to repeat the question, though Joyce's more drilled feelings were less moved. The first even felt a tear springing to his eye, and he no longer distrusted the Irishman's fidelity, unaccountable as his conduct did and must seem to his cooler judgment. But Mike's sensitiveness had taken the alarm, and it was only to be appeased by explanations.

"Yer honor's not sp'aking when I questions ye on that same!" he resumed, doubtingly.

"Why, Mike, to be sincere, it did look a little suspicious when you not only went off yourself, but you let the Indian go off with you."

"Did it?" said Mike, musing—"No, I don't allow that, seein' that the intent and object was good. And then I never took the Injin wid me; but 'twas I, meself, that went wid him."

"I rather think, your honor," said Joyce, smiling, "we'll put O'Hearn's name in its old place on the roster, and make no mark against him on pay-day."

"I think it will turn out so, Joyce. We must have patience, too, and let Mike tell his story in his own way."

"Is it tell a story, will I? Ah! Nick's the cr'ature for that same! See, he has given me foor bits of sticks, every one of which is to tell a story, in its own way. This is the first; and it manes let the captain into the secret of your retrait; and how you got out of the windie, and how you comes near to breaking yer neck by a fall because of the fut's slipping; and how ye went down the roof by a rope, the divil a bit fastening it to your neck, but houlding in yer hand with such a grip as if 'twere the fait' of the Church itself; and how Nick led ye te the hole out of which ye bot' wint, as if ye had been two cats going t'rough a door!"

Mike stopped to grin and look wise, as he recounted the manner of the escape, the outlines of which, however, were sufficiently well known to his auditors before he began.

"Throw away that stick, now, and let us know where this hole is, and what you mean by it."

"No"—answered Mike, looking at the stick, in a doubting manner—"I'll not t'row it away, wid yer honor's l'ave, till I've told ye how we got into the brook, forenent the forest, and waded up to the woods, where we was all the same as if we had been two bits of clover tops hid in a hay-mow. That Nick is a cr'ature at consailment!"

"Go on," said the captain, patiently, knowing that there was no use in hurrying one of Mike's peculiar mode of communicating his thoughts. "What came next?"

"That will I; and the r'ason comes next, as is seen by this oder stick. And so, Nick and myself was in the chaplin's room all alone, and n'ither of us had any mind to dhrink; Nick because he was a prisoner and felt crass, and full of dignity like; and meself because I was a sentinel; and Sergeant Joyce, there, had tould me, the Lord knows how often, that if I did my duty well, I might come to be a corporal, which was next in rank to himself; barring, too, that I was a sentinel, and a drunken sentinel is a disgrace to man, sowl and body, and musket."

"And so neither of you drank!"—put in the captain by way of a reminder.

"For that same r'ason, and one bether still, as we had nothin' to dhrink. Well, says Nick—'Mike,' says he—'you like cap'in, and Missus, and Miss Beuly, and Miss Maud, and the babby?' 'Divil burn ye, Nick,' says I, 'why do ye ask so foolish a question? Is it likes ye would know? Well—then just ask yourself if ye likes yer own kith and kin, and ye've got yer answer.'"

"And Nick made his proposal, on getting this answer," interrupted the captain, "which was—"

"Here it is, on the stick. 'Well,' says he—'run away wid Nick, and see Majjor; bring back news. Nick cap'in friend, but cap'in don't know it—won't believe.' Fait', I can't tell yer honor all Nick said, in his own manner; and so, wid yer l'ave, I'll just tell it in my own way."

"Any way, Mike, so that you do but tell it."

"Nick's a cr'ature! His idee was for us two to get out of the windie, and upon the platform, and to take the bed-cord, and other things, and slide down upon the ground—and we did it! As sure as your honor and the sergeant is there, we did that same, and no bones broke! 'Well,' says I, 'Nick, ye're here, sure enough, but how do you mane to get out of here? Is it climb the palisades ye will, and be shot by a sentinel?'—if there was one, which there wasn't, yer honor, seeing that all had run away—'or do ye mane to stay here,' says I, 'and be taken a prisoner of war ag'in, in which case ye'll be two prisoners, seein' that ye've been taken wonst already, will ye, Nick?' says I. So Nick never spoke, but he held up his finger, and made a sign for me to follow, as follow I did; and we just crept through the palisade, and a mighty phratty walk we had of it, alang the meadies, and t'rough the lanes, the rest of the way."

"You crept through the palisades, Mike! There is no outlet of sufficient size."

"I admits the hole is a tight squaze,

but 'twill answer. And then it's just as good for an inlet as it is for an outlet, seein' that I came t'rough it this very marnin'. Och! Nick's a cr'ature! And how d'ye think that hole comes there, barring all oversights in setting up the sticks?"

"It has not been made intentionally, I should hope, O'Hearn?"

"'Twas made by Joel, and that by just sawing off a post, and forcin' out a pin or two, so that the palisade works like a door. Och! it's nately contrived, and it manes mischief."

"This must be looked to at once," cried the captain, "lead the way, Mike, and show us the spot."

As the Irishman was nothiug loath, all three were soon in the court, whence Mike led the way through the gate, round to the point where the stockade came near the cliffs, on the eastern side of the buildings. This was the spot where the path that led down to the spring swept along the defenses, and was on the very route by which the captain contemplated retreating, as well as on that by which Maud had entered the Hut, the night of the invasion. At a convenient place a palisade had been sawed off, so low in the ground that the sods, which had been cut and were movable, concealed the injury, while the heads of the pins that ought to have bound the timber to the cross-piece were in their holes, leaving everything apparently secure. On removing the sods, and pushing the timber aside, the captain ascertained that a man might easily pass without the stockade. As this corner was the most retired within the works, there was no longer any doubt that the hole had been used by all the deserters, including the women and children. In what manner it became known to Nick, however, still remained matter of conjecture.

Orders were about to be given to secure this passage, when it occurred to the captain that it might possibly be of use in effecting his own retreat. With this object in view, then, he hastened away from the place, lest any wandering eye without might detect his presence near it, and conjecture the cause. On returning to the library, the examination of Mike was resumed.

As the reader must be greatly puzzled with the County Leitrim-man's manner of expressing himself, we shall relate the substance of what he now uttered, for the sake of brevity. It would seem that Nick had succeeded in persuading Mike, first, that he, the Tuscarora, was a fast friend of the captain and his family, confined by the former, in consequence of a misconception of the real state of the Indian's feelings, much to the detriment of all their interests; and that no better service could be rendered the Willoughbys than to let Nick depart, and for the Irishman to go with him. Mike, however, had not the slightest idea of desertion, the motive which prevailed on him to quit the Hut being a desire to see the major, and, if possible, to help him escape. As soon as this expectation was placed before his eyes, Mike became a convert to the Indian's wishes. Like all exceedingly zealous men, the Irishman had an itching propensity to be doing, and he was filled with a sort of boyish delight at the prospect of effecting a great service to those whom he so well loved, without their knowing it. Such was the history of Michael's seeming desertion; that of what occurred after he quitted the works remains to be related.

The Tuscarora led his companion out of the Hut, within half an hour after they had been left alone in the room of Mr. Woods. As this was subsequently to Joel's flight, Nick, in anticipation of this event, chose to lie in ambush for a short time, in order to ascertain whether the defection was likely to go any further. Satisfied on this head, he quietly retired toward the mill. After making a sufficient *détour* to avoid being seen from the house, Nick gave himself no trouble about getting into the woods, or practicing any of the expedients of a time of real danger, as had been done by all the deserters; but he walked leisurely across the meadows until he struck the highway, along which he proceeded forthwith to the rocks. All this was done in a way that showed that he felt himself at home, and that he

had no apprehensions of falling into an ambush. It might have arisen from his familiarity with the ground; or it might have proceeded from the consciousness that he was approaching friends instead of enemies.

At the rocks, however, Nick did not deem it wise to lead Mike any further without some preliminary caution. The white man was concealed in one of the clefts, therefore, while the Indian pursued his way alone. The latter was absent an hour; at the end of that time he returned, and after giving Mike a great many cautions about silence and prudence, he led him to the cabin of the miller, in the buttery of which Robert Willoughby was confined. To this buttery there was a window, but as it was so small as to prevent escape, no sentinel had been placed on the outside of the building. For his own comfort, too, and in order to possess his narrow lodgings to himself, the major had given a species of parole, by which he was bound to remain in duress until the rising of the next sun. Owing to these two causes, Nick had been enabled to approach the window, and to hold communications with the prisoner. This achieved, he returned to the rocks, and led Mike to the same spot.

Major Willoughby had not been able to write much, in consequence of the darkness. That which he communicated accordingly, had to pass through the fiery ordeal of the Irishman's brains. As a matter of course, it did not come with particular lucidity, though Mike did succeed in making his auditors comprehend this much.

The Major was substantially well treated, though intimations had been given that he would be considered as a spy. Escape seemed next to impossible, still he should not easily abandon the hope. From all he had seen, the party was one of that irresponsible character that would render capitulation exceedingly hazardous, and he advised his father to hold out to the last. In a military point of view he considered his captors as contemptible, being without a head, though many of the men, the savages in particular, appeared to be ferocious and reckless. The whole party was guarded in discourse, and little was said in English, though he was convinced that many more whites were present than he had first believed. Mr. Woods he had not seen, nor did he know anything of his arrest or detention.

This much Mike succeeded in making the captain comprehend, though a great deal was lost through the singular confusion that prevailed in the mind of the messenger. Mike, however, had still another communication, which we reserve for the ears of the person to whom it was especially sent.

This news produced a pause in Captain Willoughby's determination. Some of the fire of youth awoke within him, and he debated with himself on the possibility of making a sortie, and of liberating his son, as a step preliminary to victory, or at least to a successful retreat. Acquainted with every foot of the ground, which had singular facilites for a step so bold, the project found favor in his eyes each minute, and soon became fixed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

——"Another love
In its lone woof began to twine;
But, ah! the golden thread was wove
That bound my sister's heart in mine!"
—WILLIS.

WHILE the captain and Joyce were digesting their plans, Mike proceeded on an errand of peculiar delicacy with which he had been intrusted by Robert Willoughby. The report that he had returned flew through the dwellings, and many were the hearty greetings and shakings of the hand that the honest fellow had to undergo from the Plinies and Smashes, ere he was at liberty to set about the execution of this trust. The wenches, in particular, having ascertained that Mike had not broken his fast, insisted on his having a comfortable meal, in a sort of servants' hall, before they would consent to his quitting their sight. As the County Leitrim-man was singularly ready with a

knife and fork, he made no very determined opposition, and in a few minutes he was hard at work, discussing a cold ham, with the other collaterals of a substantial American breakfast.

The blacks, the Smashes inclusive, had been seriously alarmed at the appearance of the invading party. Between them and the whole family of red men there existed a sort of innate dislike, an antipathy that originated in color, and wool, and habits, and was in no degree lessened by apprehensions on the score of scalps.

"How you look, ole Plin, widout wool?" Big Smash had reproachfully remarked, not five minutes before Mike made his appearance in the kitchen, in answer to some apologetic observation of her husband, as to the intentions of the savages being less hostile than he had at first imagined; "why you say dey no murder, and steal, and set fire, when you know dey's Injin! Natur' be natur', and dat I hear dominie Woods say t'ree time one Sunday. What e' dominie say often he mean, and dere no use in saying dey don't come to do harm."

As Great Smash was an oracle in her own set, there was no gainsaying her dogmas, and Pliny the elder was obliged to succumb. But the presence of Mike, one who was understood to have been out, near, if not actually in, the enemy's camp, and a great favorite into the bargain, was a circumstance likely to revive the discourse. In fact, all the negroes crowded into the hall as soon as the Irishman was seated at table, one or two eager to talk, the rest as eager to listen.

"How near you been to sabbage, Michael?" demanded Big Smash, her two large coal-black eyes seeming to open in a degree proportioned to her interest in the answer.

"I wint as nigh as there was occasion, Smash, and that was nigher than the likes of yer husband there would be thinking of traveling. Maybe 'twas as far as from my plate here to yon door—maybe not quite so far. They're a dhirty set, and I wish to go no nearer."

"What dey look like, in 'e dark?" inquired Little Smash—"Awful as by daylight?"

"It's not meself that stopped to admire 'em. Nick and I had our business forenent us, and when a man is hurried, it isn't r'asonable to suppose he can kape turning his head about to see sights."

"What dey do wid Misser Woods? What sabbage want wid dominie?"

"Sure enough, little one; and the question is of yer own asking. A praist, even though he should be only a heretic, can have no great call for his sarvices in sich a congregation. And I don't think the fellows are blackguards enough to scalp a parson."

Then followed a flood of incoherent questions that were put by all the blacks in a body, accompanied by divers looks ominous of the most serious disasters, blended with bursts of laughter, that broke out of their risible natures in a way to render the medley of sensations as ludicrous as it was strange. Mike soon found answering a task too difficult to be attempted, and he philosophically came to a determination to confine his efforts to masticating.

Notwithstanding the terror that actually prevailed among the blacks, it was not altogether unmixed with a resolution to die with arms in their hands, in preference to yielding to savage clemency. Hatred, in a measure, supplied the place of courage, though both sexes had insensibly imbibed some of that resolution which is the result of habit, and of which a border life is certain to instil more or less into its subjects, in a form suited to border emergencies. Nor was this feeling confined to the men; the two Smashes, in particular, being women capable of achieving acts that would be thought heroic under circumstances likely to arouse their feelings.

"Now, Smashes," said Mike, when by his own calculation he had about three minutes to the termination of his breakfast before him, "ye'll do what I tells ye, and no questions asked. Ye'll find the laddies, Missus and Miss Beuly, and Miss Maud, and ye'll give my humble respects to 'em all—divil the bit, now, will ye be overlooking either of the t'ree, but ye'll do yer errand genteelly and like a laddy yourself

—and ye'll give my jewty and respects to 'em all, I tells ye, and say that Michael O'Hearn asks the honor of being allowed to wish 'em good morning."

Little Smash screamed at this message, yet she went forthwith, and delivered it, reasonably free with Michael's manner and gallantry in so doing.

"O'Hearn has something to tell us from Robert," said Mrs. Willoughby, who had been made acquainted with the Irishman's exploits and return; "he must be suffered to come here as soon as he desires."

With this reply Little Smash terminated her mission.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen," said Mike, with gravity, as he rose to quit the servants' hall, "my blessings and good wishes be wid ye. A hearty male have I had at your hands and your cookery, and good thanks it desarves. As for the Injins, jist set your hearts at rest, as not one of ye will be scalp'd the day, seeing that the savages are all to be fornent the mill this morning, houlding a great council, as I knows from Nick himself. A comfortable time, then, ye may all enjoy, wid yer heads on yer shoulders, and yer wool on yer heads."

Mike's grin, as he retreated, showed that he meant to be facetious, having all the pleasantry that attends a full stomach uppermost in his animal nature at that precise moment. A shout rewarded this sally, and the parties separated with mutual good humor and good feeling. In this state of mind the County Leitrimman was ushered into the presence of the ladies. A few words of preliminary explanations were sufficient to put Mike in proper train, when he came at once to his subject.

"The majjor is no way downhearted," he said, "and he ordered me to give his jewty and riverence and obligations to his honored mother and his sisters. 'Tell 'em, Mike,' says he, says the majjor, 'that I feels for 'em all the same as if I was their own fader; and tell 'em,' says he, 'to keep up their spirits, and all will come right in the ind. This is a throublesome world, but they that does their jewties to God and man, and the church, will not fail, in the long run, to wor-r-k their way t'rough purgatory even, into paradise.'"

"Surely, my son—my dear Robert—never sent us such a message as this, Michael?"

"Every syllable of it, and a quantity moor that has slipped my memory," answered the Irishman, who was inventing, but who fancied he was committing a very pious fraud.—"'Twould have done the Missuses heart good to have listened to the majjor, who spoke more in the cha*rack*ter of a praist like, than in that of a souldier."

All three of the ladies looked a little abashed, though there was a gleam of humor about the mouth of Maud, that showed she was not very far from appreciating the Irishman's report at its just value. As for Mrs. Willoughby and Beulah, less acquainted with Mike's habits, they did not so readily penetrate his manner of substituting his own desultory thoughts for the ideas of others.

"As I am better acquainted with Mike's language, dear mother," whispered Maud, "perhaps it will be well if I take him into the library and question him a little between ourselves about what actually passed. Depend on it, I shall get the truth."

"Do, my child, for it really pains me to hear Robert so much misrepresented—and, as Evert must now begin to have ideas, I really do not like that his uncle should be so placed before the dear little fellow's mind."

Maud did not even smile at this proof of a grandmother's weakness, though she felt and saw all its absurdity. Heart was ever so much uppermost with the excellent matron, that it was not easy for those she loved to regard anything but her virtues; and least of all did her daughter presume to indulge in even a thought that was ludicrous at her expense. Profiting by the assent, therefore, Maud quietly made a motion for Mike to follow, and proceeded at once to the room she had named.

Not a word was exchanged between the parties until both were in the library, when

Maud carefully closed the door, her face pale as marble, and stood looking inquiringly at her companion. The reader will understand that, Mr. Woods and Joyce excepted, not a soul at the Hut, out of the limits of the Willoughby connection, knew anything of our heroine's actual relation to the captain and his family. It is true, some of the oldest of the blacks had once some vague notions on the subject; but *their* recollections had become obscured by time, and habit was truly second nature with all of that light-hearted race.

"*That* was mighty injanious of you, Miss Maud!" Mike commenced, giving one of his expressive grins again, and fairly winking. "It shows how frinds wants no spache but their own minds. Barrin' mistakes and crass-accidents, I'm sartain that Michael O'Hearn can make himself understood any day by Miss Maud Willoughby, an' niver a word said."

"Your success then, Mike, will be greater at dumb-show than it always is with your tongue," answered the young lady, the blood slowly returning to her cheek, the accidental use of the name of Willoughby removing the apprehension of anything immediately embarrassing; "what have you to tell me that you suppose I have anticipated?"

"Sure, the like o' yees needn't be tould, Miss Maud, that the majjor bade me spake to ye by yerself, and say a word that was not be overheerd by any one else."

"This is singular—extraordinary even—but let me know more, though the messenger be altogether so much out of the common way!"

"I t'ought ye'd say *that*, when ye come to know me. Is it meself that's a messenger? and where is there another that can carry news widout spilling any by the way? Nick's a cra'ture, I allows; but the majjor know'd a million times betther than to trust an Injiin with such a jewty. As for Joel, and *that* set of vagabonds, we'll grind 'em all in the mill, before we've done wid 'em. Let 'em look for no favors, if they wishes no disapp'intment."

Maud sickened at the thought of having any of those sacred feelings connected with Robert Willoughby that she had so long cherished in her inmost heart, rudely probed by so unskillful a hand; though her last conversation with the young soldier had told so much, even while it left so much unsaid, that she could almost kneel and implore Mike to be explicit. The reserve of a woman, notwithstanding, taught her how to preserve her sex's decorum, and to maintain appearances.

"If Major Willoughby desired you to communicate anything to me, in particular," she said, with seeming composure, "I am ready to hear it."

"Divil the word did he desire, Miss Maud, for everything was in whispers between us, but jist what I'm about to repait. And here's my stick, that Nick tould me to kape as a reminder; it's far bether for me than a book, as I can't read a syllable. 'And now, Mike,' says the majjor, says he, 'conthrive to see phratty Miss Maud by herself—'"

"*Pretty* Miss Maud!" interrupted the young lady, involuntarily.

"Och! it's meself that says *that*, and sure's there's plenty of r'ason for it; so we'll agree it's all right and proper—'phratty Miss Maud by herself, letting no mortal else know what you are about.' *That* was the majjor's."

"It is very extraordinary! Perhaps it will be better, Michael, if you tell me nothing but what is strictly the major's. A message should be delivered as nearly like the words that were actually sent as possible."

"Wor-r-ds! And it isn't wor-r-ds at all, that I have to give ye."

"If not a message in words, in what else can it be? Not in sticks, surely?"

"In *that*"—cried Mike, exultingly—"and, I'll warrant, when the trut' comes out, that very little bit of silver will be found as good as forty Injin scalps."

Although Mike put a small silver snuff-box that Maud at once recognized as Robert Willoughby's property into the young lady's hand, nothing was more apparent than the circumstance that he was profoundly ignorant of the true meaning of what he was doing. The box was very beautiful, and his mother and Beulah had

often laughed at the major for using an article that was then deemed *de rigueur* for a man of extreme *ton*, when all his friends knew he never touched snuff. So far from using the stimulant, indeed, he never would show how the box was opened, a secret spring existing; and he even manifested or betrayed shyness on the subject of suffering either of his sisters to search for the means of doing so.

The moment Maud saw the box, her heart beat tumultuously. She had a presentiment that her fate was about to be decided. Still, she had sufficient self-command to make an effort to learn all her companion had to communicate.

"Major Willoughby gave you this box," she said, her voice trembling in spite of herself. "Did he send any message with it? Recollect yourself; the words may be very important."

"Is it the wor-r-ds? Well, it's little of *them* that passed between us, barrin' that the Injins was so near by, that it was whisper we did, and not a bit else."

"Still there *must* have been *some* message."

"Ye are as wise as a sarpent, Miss Maud, as Father O'Loony used to tell us all of a Sunday! Was it wor-r-ds! 'Give *that* to Miss Maud,' said the majjor, says he, 'and tell her she is how *misthress of my sacret*.'"

"Did he say this, Michael? For heaven's sake, be certain of what you tell me."

"Irish Mike—Masser wants you in monstrous hurry," cried the youngest of the three black men, thrusting his glistening face in at the door, announcing the object of the intrusion, and disappearing almost at the same instant.

"Do not leave me, O'Hearn," said Maud, nearly gasping for breath, "do not leave me without an assurance there is no mistake."

"Divil bur-r-n me, if I'd brought the box, or the message, or anything like it, phretty Miss Maud, had I t'ought it would have done this har-r-m."

"Michael O'Hearn!" called the sergeant from the court in his most authoritative military manner, and that on a key that would not brook denial.

Mike did not dare to delay; in half a minute Maud found herself standing alone, in the center of the library, holding the well-known snuff-box of Robert Willoughby in her little hand. The renowned caskets of Portia had scarcely excited more curiosity in their way than this little silver box of the major's had created in the mind of Maud. In addition to his playful evasions about letting her and Beulah pry into its mysteries, he had once said to herself, in a grave and feeling manner, "When you get at the contents of this box, dear girl, you will learn the great secret of my life." These words had make a deep impression at the time—it was in his visit of the past year—but they had been temporarily forgotten in the variety of events and stronger sensations that had succeeded. Mike's message, accompanied by the box itself, however, recalled them, and Maud fancied that the major, considering himself to be in some dangerous emergency, had sent her the bauble in order that she might learn what that secret was. Possibly he meant her to communicate it to others. Persons in our heroine's situation feel more than they reason; and it is possible Maud might have come to some other conclusion had she been at leisure, or in a state of mind to examine all the circumstances in a more logical manner,

Now she was in possession of this long-coveted box—coveted at least so far as a look into its contents were concerned—Maud not only found herself ignorant of the secret by which it was opened, but she had scruples about using the means, even had she been in possession of them. At first she thought of carrying the thing to Beulah, and of asking if she knew any way of getting at the spring; then she shrank from the exposure that might possibly attend such a step. The more she reflected the more she felt convinced that Robert Willoughby would not have sent *her* that particular box unless it was connected with herself, in some way more than common; and ever since the conversation in the painting-room she had seen glimmerings of the truth in relation to his feelings. These glimmerings, too,

had aided her in better understanding her own heart, and all her sentiments revolted at the thought of having a witness to any explanation that might relate to the subject. In every event she determined, after a few minutes of thought, not to speak of the message, or the present, to a living soul.

In this condition of mind, filled with anxiety, pleasing doubts, apprehensions, shame, and hope, all relieved, however, by the secret consciousness of perfect innocence, and motives that an angel might avow, Maud stood, in the very spot where Mike had left her, turning to the box in her hands, when accidentally she touched the spring and the lid flew open. To glance at the contents was an act so natural and involuntary as to anticipate reflection.

Nothing was visible but a piece of white paper, neatly folded, and compressed into the box in a way to fill its interior. "Bob has written," thought Maud—"Yet how could he do this? He was in the dark, and had not pen or paper!" Another look rendered this conjecture still more improbable, as it showed the gilt edge of paper of the quality used for notes, an article equally unlikely to be found in the mill and in his own pocket. "Yet it must be a note," passed through her mind, "and of cousse it was written before he left the Hut—quite likely before he arrived—possibly the year before, when he spoke of the box as containing the evidence of the great secret of his life."

Maud now wished for Mike, incoherent, unintelligible and blundering as he was, that she might question him still further as to the precise words of the message. "Possibly Bob did not intend me to open the box at all," she thought, "and meant merely that I should keep it until he could return to claim it. It contains a great secret; and, because he wishes to keep this secret from the Indians, it does not follow that he intends to reveal it to me. I will shut the box again, and guard his secret as I would one of my own."

This was no sooner *thought* that it was *done*. A pressure of the lid closed it, and Maud heard the snap of the spring with a start. Scarcely was the act performed ere she repented it. "Bob would not have sent the box without some particular object," she went on to imagine; "and had he intended it not to be opened, he would have told as much to O'Hearn. How easy would it have been for him to say, and for Mike to repeat, 'tell her to keep the box till I ask for it—it contains a secret, and I wish my captors not to learn it.' No, he has sent the box with the design that I should examine its contents. His very life may depend on my doing so; yes, and on my doing so this minute!"

This last notion no sooner glanced athwart our heroine's mind, than she began diligently to search for the hidden spring. Perhaps curiosity had its influence on the eagerness to arrive at the secret, which she now manifested; possibly a tender and still more natural feeling lay concealed behind it all. At any rate, her pretty little fingers never were employed more nimbly, and not a part of the exterior of the box escaped their pressure. Still, the secret spring eluded her search. The box had two or three bands of richly chased work on each side of the place of opening, and amid these ornaments Maud felt certain that the little projection she sought must lie concealed. To examine these, then, she commenced in a regular and connected manner, resolved that not a single raised point should be neglected. Accident, however, as before, stood her friend; and, at a moment when she least expected it, the lid flew back, once more exposing the paper to view.

Maud had been too seriously alarmed about reopening the box to hesitate a moment now as to examining its contents. The paper was removed, and she began to unfold it slowly, a slight tremor passing through her frame as she did so. For a single instant she paused to scent the delightful and delicate perfume that seemed to render the interior sacred; then her fingers resumed their office. At each instant, her eyes expected to meet Robert Willoughby's well-known handwriting. But the folds of the paper opened on a blank. To Maud's surprise, and, for a single exquisitely painful mo-

ment, she saw that a lock of hair was all the box contained, besides the paper in which it was enveloped. Her look became anxious, and her face pale; then the eyes brightened and a blush, that might well be likened to the tints with which the approach of dawn illumines the sky, suffused her cheeks, as, holding the hair to the light, the long ringlets dropped at length, and she recognized one of those beautiful tresses, of which so many were falling at that very moment, in rich profusion, around her own lovely face. To unloosen her hair from the comb, and to lay the secret of Bob Willoughby by its side, in a way to compare the glossy shades, was the act of only a moment; it sufficed, however, to being a perfect conviction of the truth. It was a memorial of herself, then, that Robert Willoughby so prized, had so long guarded with care, and which he called the secret of his life!

It was impossible for Maud not to understand all this. Robert Willoughby loved her and had taken this mode of telling his passion. He had been on the point of doing this in words the very day before; and now he availed himself of the only means that offered of completing the tale. A flood of tenderness gushed to the heart of Maud, as she passed over all this in her mind; and, from that moment, she ceased to feel shame at the recollection of her own attachment. She might still have shrunk a little from avowing it to her father and mother, and Beulah; but, as to herself, the world, and the object of her affections, she now stood perfectly vindicated in her own eyes.

That was a precious half-hour which succeeded. For the moment, all present dangers were lost sight of, in the glow of future hopes. Maud's imagination portrayed scenes of happiness, in which domestic duties, Bob beloved, almost worshiped, and her father and mother happy in the felicity of their children, were the prominent features; while Beulah and little Evart filled the background of the picture in colors of pleasing softness. But these were illusions that could not last forever, the fearful realities of her situation returning with the greater consciousness of existence. Still, Bob might now be loved, without wounding any of the sensitiveness of her sex's opinions; and dearly, engrossingly, passionately was he rewarded, for the manner in which he had though of letting her know the true state of his heart, at a moment when he had so much reason to think only of himself.

It was time for Maud to return to her mother and sister. The box was carefully concealed, leaving the hair in its old envelope, and she hurried to the nursery. On entering the room, she found that her father had just preceded her. The captain was grave, more thoughtful than usual, and his wife, accustomed to study his countenance for so much of her happiness, saw at once that something lay heavy on his mind.

"Has anything out of the way happened, Hugh," she asked, "to give you uneasiness?"

Captain Willoughby drew a chair to the side of that of his wife, seated himself, and took her hand before he answered. Little Evert, who sat on her knee, was played with for a moment, as if to defer a disagreeable duty; not till then did he speak.

"You know, dearest Wilhelmina," the captain finally commenced, "that there have never been any concealments beween us, on the score of danger, even when I was a professed soldier, and might be said to carry my life in my hand."

"You have ever found me reasonable, I trust; while feeling like a woman, mindful of my duty as a wife?"

"I have, love; this is the reason I have always dealt with you so frankly."

"We understand each other, Hugh. Now tell me the worst at once."

"I am not certain you will think there is any worst about it, Wilhelmina, as Bob's liberty is the object. I intend to go out myself, at the head of all the white men that remain, in order to deliver him from the hands of his enemies. This will leave you, for a time—six or seven hours, perhaps—in the Hut, with only the three blacks as a guard, and with the females. You need have no ap-

prehension of an assault, however, everything indicating a different intention on the part of our enemies; on that score you may set your heart at rest."

"All my apprehensions and prayers will be for you, my husband—for ourselves we care not."

"This I expected; it is to lessen these very apprehensions that I have come to tell you my whole plan."

Captain Willoughby now related, with some minuteness, the substance of Mike's report, and his own plan, of the last of which we have already given an outline. Everything had been well matured in his mind, and all promised success. The men were apprised of the service on which they were to be employed, and every one of them had manifested the best spirit. They were then busy in equiping themselves; in half an hour they would be ready to march.

To all this Mrs. Willoughby listened like a soldier's wife, accustomed to the risks of a frontier warfare, though she felt like a woman. Beulah pressed little Evert to her heart, while her pallid countenance was turned to her father with a look that seemed to devour every syllable. As for Maud, a strange mixture of dread and wild delight was blended in her bosom. To have Bob liberated, and restored to them, was approaching perfect happiness, though it surpassed her powers not to dread misfortunes. Nevertheless, the captain was so clear in his explanations, so calm in his manner, and of a judgment so approved, that his auditors felt far less concern than might naturally have been expected.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"March—march—march!
Making sounds as they tread,
Ho-ho! how they step,
Going down to the dead."—COXE.

THE time Maud consumed in her meditations over the box and its contents, had been employed by the captain in preparations for his enterprise. Joyce, young Blodget, Jamie and Mike, led by their commander in person, were to compose the whole force on the occasion; and every man had been busy in getting his arms, ammunition, and provisions ready, for the last half-hour. When Captain Willoughby, therefore, had taken leave of his family, he found the party in a condition to move.

The first great desideratum was to quit the Hut unseen. Joel and his followers were still at work in distant fields; but they all carefully avoided that side of the Knoll which would have brought them within reach of the musket, and this left all behind the cliff unobserved, unless Indians were in the woods in that direction. As Mike had so recently passed in by that route, however, the probability was the whole party still remained in the neighborhood of the mills, where all accounts agreed in saying they mainly kept. It was the intention of the captain, therefore to sally by the rivulet and the rear of the house, and to gain the woods under cover of the bushes on the banks of the former, as had already been done by so many since the inroad.

The great difficulty was to quit the house and reach the bed of the stream unseen. This step, however, was a good deal facilitated by means of Joel's sally-port, the overseer having taken himself all the precautions against detection of which the case well admitted. Nevertheless, there was the distance between the palisades and the base of the rocks, some forty or fifty yards, which was entirely uncovered, and had to be passed under the notice of any wandering eyes that might happen to be turned in that quarter. After much reflection, the captain and sergeant came to the conclusion to adopt the following mode of proceeding.

Blodget passed the hole, by himself, unarmed, rolling down the declivity until he reached the stream. Here a thicket concealed him sufficiently, the bushes extending along the base of the rocks, following the curvature of the rivulet. Once within these bushes, there was little danger of detection. As soon as it was ascertained that the young man was beneath the most eastern of the outer windows of the northern wing, the only

one of the entire range that had bushes directly under it, all the rifles were lowered down to him, two at a time, care being had that no one should appear at the window during the operation. This was easily effected, jerks at the rope sufficing for the necessary signals when to haul in the line. The ammunition succeeded; and, in this manner, all the materials of offense and defense were soon collected on the margin of the stream.

The next step was to send the men out, one by one, imitating the precautions taken by Blodget. Each individual had his own provisions, and most of the men carried some sort of arms, such as a pistol or a knife, about his person. In half an hour the four men were armed, and waited for the leader, concealed by the bushes on the border of the brook. It only remained for Captain Willoughby to give some instructions to those he left in Hut, and to follow.

Pliny the elder, in virtue of his years and some experience in Indian warfare, succeeded to the command of the garrison, in the absence of its chief. Had there remained a male white at the Knoll, this trust never could have devolved on him, it being thought contrary to the laws of nature for a negro to command one of the other color; but such was not the fact, and Pliny the elder succeeded pretty much as a matter of course. Notwithstanding, he was to obey not only his particular *old* mistress, but both his *young* mistresses, who exercised an authority over him that was not to be disputed, without doing violence to all the received notions of the day. To him, then, the captain issued his final orders, bidding him be vigilant, and above all to keep the gates closed.

As soon as this was done, the husband and father went to his wife and children to take a last embrace. Anxious not to excite too strong apprehensions by his manner, this was done affectionately—solemnly, perhaps—but with a manner so guarded as to effect its object.

"I shall look for no other signal, or sign of success, Hugh," said the weeping wife, "than your own return, accompanied by our dearest boy. When I can hold you both in my arms, I shall be happy, though all the Indians of the continent were in the valley."

"Do not miscalculate as to time, Wilhelmina. That affectionate heart of yours sometimes travels over time and space in a way to give its owner unnecessary pain. Remember we shall have to proceed with great caution, both in going and returning; and it will require hours to make the *détour* I have in view. I hope to see you again before sunset, but a delay may carry us into the night. It may even become necessary to defer the final push until after dark."

This was melancholy intelligence for the females; but they listened to it with calmness, and endeavored to be, as well as to seem, resigned. Beulah received her father's kiss and blessing with streaming eyes, straining little Evert to her heart as he left her. Maud was the last embraced. He even led her, by gentle violence, to the court, keeping her in discourse by the way, exhorting her to support her mother's spirits by her own sense and steadfastness.

"I shall have Bob in the Hut soon," he added, "and this will repay us all for more than twice the risks—all but you, little vixen, for your mother tells me you are getting through some caprice of that variable humor of your sex, to be a little estranged from the poor fellow."

"Father!"

"Oh! I know it is not very serious; still, even Beulah tells me you once called him a Major of Foot."

"Did I?" said Maud, trembling in her whole frame lest her secret had been prematurely betrayed by the very attempt to conceal it. "My tongue is not always my heart."

"I know it, darling, unless where I am concerned. Treat the son as you will, Maud, I am certain that you will always love the father." A pressure to the heart, and kisses on the forehead, eyes, and cheeks followed. "You have all your own papers, Maud, and can easily understand your own affairs. When examined into, it will be seen that every shilling of your fortune has gone to in-

crease it; and, little hussy, you are now become something like a great heiress."

"What does this mean, dearest, dearest father? Your words frighten me!"

"They should not, love. Danger is never increased by being prepared to meet it. I have been a steward and wish it to be known that the duty has not been unfaithfully discharged. That is all. A hundred-fold am I repaid by possessing so dutiful and sweet a child."

Maud fell on her father's bosom and sobbed. Never before had he made so plain allusions to the true relations which existed between them; the papers she possessed having spoken for themselves, and having been given in silence. Nevertheless, as he appeared disposed to proceed no further, at present, the poor girl struggled to command herself, succeeded in part, rose, received her father's benediction, most solemnly and tenderly delivered, and saw him depart, with an air of calmness that subsequently astonished even herself.

We must now quit the interesting group that was left behind in the Hut, and accompany the adventurers in their march.

Captain Willoughby was obliged to imitate his men, in the mode of quitting the palisades. He had dressed himself in the American hunting-shirt and trousers for the occasion; and this being an attire he now rarely used, it greatly diminished the chances of his being recognized, if seen. Joyce was in a similar garb, though neither Jamie nor Mike could ever be persuaded to assume a style that both insisted so much resembled that of the Indians. As for Blodget, he was in the usual dress of a laborer.

As soon as he had reached the bottom of the cliff, the captain let the fact be known to Old Pliny, by using his voice with caution, though sufficiently loud to be heard on the staging of the roof, directly above his head. The black had been instructed to watch Joel and his companions in order to ascertain if they betrayed, in their movements, any consciousness of what was in progress at the Hut. The report was favorable, Pliny assuring his master that "all 'e men work, sir, just as afore. Joel hammer away a plow-handle, tinkerin' just like hisself. Not an eye turn dis way, massa."

Encouraged by this assurance, the whole party stole through the bushes that lined this part of the base of the cliff, until they entered the bed of the stream. It was September, and the water was so low as to enable the party to move along the margin of the rivulet dry-shod, occasionally stepping from stone to stone. The latter expedient, indeed, was adopted wherever circumstances allowed, with a view to leave as few traces of a trial as was practicable. Otherwise the cover was complete; the winding of the rivulet preventing any distant view through its little reaches, and the thick fringe of the bushes on each bank effectually concealing the men against any passing, lateral glimpse of their movements.

Captain Willoughby had, from the first, apprehended an assault from this quarter. The house in its elevation, however, possessed an advantage that would not be enjoyed by an enemy on the ground; and then the cliff offered very serious obstacles to anything like a surprise on that portion of the defenses. Notwithstanding, he now led his men, keeping a look riveted on the narrow lane in his front, far from certain that each turn might not bring him in presence of an advancing party of the enemy. No such unpleasant encounter occurred; and the margin of the forest was gained, without any appearance of the foe, and seemingly without discovery.

Just within the cover of the woods, a short reach of the rivulet lay fairly in sight, from the rear wing of the dwellings. It formed a beautiful object in the view; the ardent and tasteful Maud having sketched the silvery ribbon of water, as it was seen retiring within the recesses of the forest, and often calling upon others to admire its loveliness and picturesque effect. Here the captain halted, and made a signal to Old Pliny, to let him know he waited for an answer. The reply was favorable, the negro showing

the sign that all was still well. This was no sooner done than the faithful old black hurried down to his mistress to communicate the intelligence that the party was safely in the forest, while the adventurers turned, ascended the bank of the stream, and pursued their way on more solid ground.

Captain Willoughby and his men were now fairly engaged in the expedition, and every soul of them felt the importance and gravity of the duty he was on. Even Mike was fain to obey the order to be silent, as the sound of a voice, indiscreetly used, might betray the passage of the party to some outlying scouts of the enemy. Caution was even used in treading on dried sticks, least their cracking should produce the same effect.

The sound of the ax was heard in the rear of the cabins coming from a piece of woodland the captain had ordered cleared, with the double view of obtaining fuel, and of increasing his orchards. This little clearing was near a quarter of a mile from the flats, the plan being, still to retain a belt of forest round the latter; and it might have covered half a dozen acres of land, having now been used four or five years for the same purpose. To pass between this clearing and the cabins would been too hazardous, and it became necessary to direct the march in a way to turn the former.

The cow-paths answered as guides for quite a mile, Mike being thoroughly acquainted with all their sinuosities. The captain and sergeant, however, each carried a pocket compass, an instrument without which few ventured far into the forests. Then the blows of the axes served as sounds to let the adventurers know their relative position, and as they circled the place whence they issued, they gave the constant assurance of their own progress, and probable security.

The reader will probably comprehend the nature of the ground over which our party was now marching. The "flats" proper, or the site of the old beaver dam, have already been described. The valley, toward the south, terminated at the rocks of the mill, changing its character below that point, to a glen, or vast ravine. On the east were mountains of considerable height, and of unlimited range; to the north, the level land extended miles, though on a platform many feet higher than the level of the cleared meadows; while to the west, along the route the adventurers were marching, broad slopes of rolling forest spread their richly-wooded surfaces, filled with fair promise for the future. The highest swell of this undulating forest was that nearest to the Hut, and it was its elevation only that gave the home-scene the character of a valley.

Captain Willoughby's object to gain the summit of this first ridge of land, which would serve as a guide to his object, since it terminated at the line of rocks that made the waterfall, quite a mile, however, in the rear of the mills. It would carry him also quite beyond the clearing of the wood-choppers, and be effectually turning the whole of the enemy's position. Once at the precipitous termination, caused by the face of rock that had been thrown to the surface by some geological phenomenon, he could not miss his way, since these rugged marks must of themselves lead him directly to the station known to be occupied by the body of his foes.

Half an hour served to reach the desired ridge, when the party changed its march, pursuing a direction nearly south, along its summit.

"Those axes sound nearer and nearer, sergeant," Captain Willoughby observed, after the march had lasted a long time in profound silence. "We must be coming up near the point where the men are at work."

"Does your honor reflect at all on the reason why these fellows are so particularly industrious in a time like this? To me it has a very ambuscadish sort of look."

"It cannot be connected with an ambuscade, Joyce, inasmuch as we are not supposed to be on a march. There can be no ambuscade, you will remember, practiced on a garrison."

"I ask your honor's pardon—may not a sortie be ambushed, as well as a march?"

"In that sense, perhaps, you may be right. And, now you mention it, I think it odd there should be so much industry at wood-chopping, in a moment like this. We will halt as soon as the sounds are fairly abreast of us, when you and I can reconnoiter the men, and ascertain the appearance of things for ourselves."

"I remember, sir, when your honor led out two companies of ours, with one of the royal Irish, a major's command of good rights, to observe the left flank of the French, the evening before we stormed the enemy's works at Ty—"

"Your memory is beginning to fail you, Joyce," interrupted the captain, smiling. "We were far from storming those works, having lost two thousand men before them, and failed of seeing their inside at all."

"I always look upon a soldierly attempt, your honor, the same as a thing that is done. A more gallant stand than we made I never witnessed; and, though we were driven back, I will allow, yet I call that assault as good as storming!"

"Well, have it your own way, Joyce. The morning before your storming, I remember to have led out three companies; though it was more in advance, than on either flank. The object was to unmask a suspected ambush."

"That's just what I wanted to be at, your honor. The General sent you, as an old captain, with three companies, to spring the trap, before he should put his own foot into it."

"He certainly did—and the movement had the desired effect."

"Better and better, sir. I remember we were fired on and lost some ten or fifteen men, but I would not presume to say whether the march succeeded or not; for nothing was said of the affair, next day, in general orders, sir—"

"Next day we had other matters to occupy our minds. It was a bloody and a mournful occasion for England and her colonies."

"Well, your honor, that does not affect our movement, which you say yourself was useful."

"Very true, Joyce, though the great calamity of the succeeding day prevented the little success of the preceding morning from being mentioned in general orders. But to what does all this tend; as I know that it must lead to something?"

"It was merely meant as a respectful hint, your honor, that the inferior should be sent out, now, according to our own ancient rules, to reconn'iter the clearing, while the commander-in-chief remain with the main body, to cover the retreat."

"I thank you, sergeant, and shall not fail to employ you, on all proper occasions. At present, it is my intention that we go together, leaving the men to take breath, in a suitable cover."

This satisfied Joyce, who was content to wait for orders. As soon as the sounds of the axes showed that the party were far enough in advance, and the formation of the land assured the captain that he was precisely where he wished to be, the men were halted, and left secreted in a cover made by the top of a fallen tree. This precaution was taken lest any wandering savage might get a glimpse of their persons, if they stood lounging about in the more open forest, during the captain's absence.

This disposition made, the captain and sergeant, first examining the priming of their pieces, moved with the necessary caution toward the edge of the wood-choppers' clearing. The ax was a sufficient guide, and ere they had proceeded far the light began to shine through the trees—proof in itself that they were approaching an opening in the forest.

"Let us incline to the left, your honor," said Joyce, respectfully; "there is a naked rock hereabouts, that completely overlooks the clearing, and where we can get even a peep at the Hut. I have often sat on it, when out with the gun, and wearied; for the next thing to being at home is to see home."

"I remember the place, sergeant, and like your suggestion," answered the captain, with an eagerness that it was very unusual for him to betray. "I could march with a lighter heart, after getting another look at the Knoll, and being certain of its security."

The parties being both of a mind, it is not surprising that each looked eagerly for the spot in question. It was an isolated rock that rose some fifteen or twenty feet above the surface of the ground, having a width and depth about double its height—one of those common excrescences of the forest that usually possess interest for no one but the geologist. Such an object was not difficult to find in an open wood, and the search was soon rewarded by a discovery. Bending their steps that way, our two soldiers were quickly at its base. As is usual, the summit of this fragment of rock was covered with bushes; others shooting out, also, from the rich, warm earth at its base, or, to speak more properly, at its junction with the earth.

Joyce ascended first, leaving his rifle in the captain's charge. The latter followed, after having passed up his own and his companion's arms; neither being disposed to stir without having these important auxiliaries at command. Once on the rock, both moved cautiously to its eastern brow, care being had not to go beyond the cover. Here they stood, side by side, gazing on the scene that was outspread before them through openings in the bushes.

To the captain's astonishment, he found himself within half musket shot of the bulk of the hostile party. A regular bivouac had been formed round a spring in the center of the clearing, and the bodies of trees had been thrown together so as to form a species of work which was rudely but effectually abattied by the branches. In a word, one of those strong, rough forest encampments had been made which are so difficult to carry without artillery, more especially if well defended. By being placed in the center of the clearing, an assault could not be made without exposing the assailants, and the spring always assured to the garrison the great requisite, water.

There was a method and order in this arrangement that surprised both our old soldiers. That Indians had resorted to this expedient neither believed; nor would the careless, untaught, and inexperienced whites of the Mohawk be apt to adopt it, without a suggestion from some person acquainted with the usages of frontier warfare. Such persons were not difficult to find, it is true; and it was a proof that those claiming to be in authority, rightfully or not, were present.

There was something unlooked for, also, in the manner in which the party of strangers were lounging about, at a moment like that, seemingly doing nothing, or preparing for no service. Joyce, who was a man of method, and was accustomed to telling off troops, counted no less than forty-nine of these idlers, most of whom were lounging near the log entrenchment, though a few were sauntering about the clearing, conversing with the wood-choppers, or making their observations listlessly, and seemingly without any precise object in view.

"This is the most extr'ordinary sight, for a military expedition, I have ever seen, your honor," whispered Joyce, after the two had stood examining the position for quite a minute in silence. "A tolerable good log breast-work, I will allow, sir, and men enough to make it good against a sharp assault; but nothing like a guard, and not so much as a single sentinel. This is an affront to the art, Captain Willoughby; and is such an affront to us, that I feel certain we might carry the post by surprise, if all felt the insult as I do myself."

"This is no time for rash acts or excited feelings, Joyce. Though, were my gallant boy with us, I do think we might make a push at these fellows, with very reasonable chances of success."

"Yes, your honor, and without him, too. A close fire, three cheers, and a vigorous charge would drive every one of the rascals into the woods!"

"Where they would rally, become the assailants in their turn, surround us, and either compel us to surrender, or starve us out. At all events, nothing of the sort must be undertaken until we have carried out the plan for the rescue of Major Willoughby. My hopes of success are greatly increased since I find the enemy has his principal post up here, where he must be a long half mile from the mill, even in a

straight line. You have counted the enemy?"

"There are just forty-nine of them in sight, and I should think some eight or ten more sleeping about under the logs, as I occasionally discover a new one raising his head. Look, sir, does your honor see that maneuver?"

"Do I see what, sergeant? There is no visible change that I discover."

"Only an Indian chopping wood, Captain Willoughby, which is some such miracle as a white man painting."

The reader will have understood that all the hostile party that was lounging about this clearing were in Indian guise, with faces and hands of the well-known reddish color that marks the American aborigines. The two soldiers could discover many evidences that there was deception in these appearances, though they thought it quite probable that real red men were mingled with the pale-faces. But, so little did the invaders respect the necessity of appearances in their present position, that one of these seeming savages had actually mounted a log, taken the ax from the hands of its owner, and began to chop with a vigor and skill that soon threw off chips in a way that no man can successfully imitate but the expert ax-man of the American interior.

"Pretty well, that, sir, for a redskin," said Joyce, smiling. "If there isn't white blood, ay, and Yankee blood in that chap's arm, I'll give him some of my own to help color it. Step this way, your honor—only a foot or two—there, sir, by looking through the opening just above the spot where that very make-believe Injin is scattering his chips as if they were so many kernels of corn that he was tossing to the chickens, you will get a sight of the Hut."

The fact was so. By altering his own position a little on the rock, Captain Willoughby got a full view of the entire buildings of the Knoll. It is true he could not see the lawn without the works, nor quite all of the stockade, but the whole of the western wing, or an entire side view of the dwelling, was obtained. Everything seemed as tranquil and secure, in and around them, as if they vegetated in a Sabbath in the wilderness. There was something imposing, even, in the solemn silence of their air, and the captain now saw that if he had been struck and rendered uneasy by the mystery that accompanied the inaction and quiet of his invaders, they, in their turns, might experience some such sensations as they gazed on the repose of the Hut, and the apparent security of its garrison. But for Joel's desertion, indeed, and the information he had carried with him, there could be little doubt that the strangers must have felt the influence of such doubts to a very material extent. Alas! as things were, it was not probable they could be long imposed on by any seeming calm.

Captain Willoughby felt reluctance to tear himself away from the spectacle of that dwelling which contained so many that were dear to him. Even Joyce gazed at the house with pleasure, for it had been his quarters, now, so many years, and he had looked forward to the time when he should breathe his last in it. Connected with his old commander by a tie that was inseparable, so far as human wishes could control human events, it was impossible that the sergeant could go from the place where they had left so many precious beings almost in the keeping of Providence, at a moment like that, altogether without emotion. While each was thus occupied in mind, there was a perfect stillness. The men of the party had been so far drilled, as to speak in low voices, and nothing they said was audible on the rock. The axes alone broke the silence of the woods, and to ears so accustomed to their blows, they offered no intrusion. In the midst of the eloquent calm, the bushes of the rock rustled, as it might be with the passage of a squirrel or a serpent. Of the last the country had but few, and they of the most innocent kind, while the former abounded. Captain Willoughby turned, expecting to see one of these little restless beings, when his gaze encountered a swarthy face, and two glowing eyes, almost within reach of his arm. That this was a real Indian was beyond dispute, and

the crisis admitting of no delay, the old officer drew a dirk, and had already raised his arm to strike, when Joyce arrested the blow.

"This is Nick, your honor," said the sergeant, inquiringly—"Is he friend or foe?"

"What says he himself?" answered the captain, lowering his head in doubt. "Let him speak to his own character."

Nick now advanced and stood calmly and fearlessly at the side of the two white men. Still there was ferocity in his look, and an indecision in his movements. He certainly might betray the adventurers at any instant, and they felt all the insecurity of their situation. But accident had brought Nick directly in front of the opening through which was obtained the view of the Hut. In turning from one to the other of the two soldiers, his quick eye took in this glimpse of the buildings, and it became riveted there as by the charm of fascination. Gradually the ferocity left his countenance, which grew human and soft.

"Squaw in wigwam"—said the Tuscarora, throwing forward a hand, with its forefinger pointing toward the house. "Ole squaw—young squaw. Good. Wyandotté sick, she cure him. Blood in Injin body; thick blood—nebber forget good—nebber forget bad."

CHAPTER XXV.

"Every stride—every stamp,
Every footfall is bolder;
'Tis a skeleton's tramp,
With a skull on its shoulder?
But ho, how he steps
With a high-tossing head,
That clay-covered bone,
Going down to the dead!"—COXE.

NICK'S countenance was a fair index to his mind; nor were his words intended to deceive. Never did Wyandotte forget the good or evil that was done him. After looking intently a short time at the Hut, he turned and abruptly demanded of his companions—

"Why come here? Like to see enemy between you and wigwam?"

As all Nick said was uttered in a guarded tone, as if he fully entered into the necessity or remaining concealed from those who were in such a dangerous vicinity, it served to inspire confidence, inducing the two soldiers to believe him disposed to serve them.

"Am I to trust in you as a friend?" demanded the captain, looking the Indian steadily in the eye.

"Why won't trust? Nick no hero—gone away—Nick nebber come ag'in—Wyandotte hero—who no trust Wyandotte? Yengeese always trust great chief."

"I shall take you at your word, Wyandotte, and tell you everything, hoping to make an ally of you. But, first explain to me why you left the Hut last night—friends do not desert friends."

"Why leave wigwam? Because want to. Wyandotte come when he want; go when he want. Mike go too. Went to see son—come back; tell story; eh?"

"Yes, it has happened much as you say, and I am willing to think it all occurred with the best motives. Can you tell me anything of Joel, and the others who have left me?"

"Why tell? Cap'in look; he see. Some chop—some plow—some weed—some dig ditch. All like ole time. Bury hatchet—tired of war-path—why cap'in ask?"

"I see all you tell me. You know, then, that those fellows have made friends with the hostile party?"

"No need know—see. Look—Injin chop, pale-face look on! Call that war?"

"I do see that which satisfies me the men in paint yonder are not all red-men."

"No—cap'in right—tell him so in wigwam. But dat Mohawk—dog—rascal—Nick's enemy!"

This was said with a gleam of fierceness shooting across the swarthy face, and a menacing gesture of the hand, in the direction of a real savage who was standing indolently leaning against a tree, at a distance so small as to allow those on the rock to distinguish his features. The vacant expression of this man's countenance plainly denoted that he was totally

unconscious of the vicinity of danger. It expressed the listless vacancy of an Indian in a state of perfect rest—his stomach full, his body at ease, his mind peaceful.

"I thought Nick was not here," the captain quietly observed, smiling on the Tuscarora a little ironically.

"Cap'in right—Nick no here. Well for dog 'tis so. Too mean for Wyandotte to touch. What cap'in come for? Eh! Better tell chief — get council without lightin' fire."

"As I see no use in concealing my plan from you, Wyandotte" — Nick seemed pleased whenever this name was pronounced by others—"I shall tell you, freely. Still, you have more to relate to me. Why are *you* here? And how came you to discover us?"

"Follow trail—know cap'in foot—know sergeant foot—know Mike foot — see so many foot, follow him. Leave so many," holding up three fingers, "in bushes—so many," holding up two fingers, "come here. Foot tell *which* come here—Wyandotte chief—he follow chief."

"When did you first strike, or see our trail, Tuscarora?"

"Up here—down yonder—over dere." Captain Willoughby understood this to mean, that the Indian had crossed the trail or seen it in several places. "Plenty trail; plenty foot to tell all about it. Wyandotte see foot of friend—why he don't follow, eh?"

"I hope this is all so, old warrior, and that you will prove yourself a friend indeed. We are out in the hope of liberating my son, and we came here to see what our enemies are about."

The Tuscarora's eyes were like two inquisitors, as he listened; but he seemed satisfied that the truth was told him. Assuming an air of interest, he inquired if the captain knew where the major was confined. A few words explained everything, and the parties soon understood each other.

"Cap'in right," observed Nick. "Son in cupboard still; but plenty warrior near, to keep eye on him."

"You know his position, Wyandotte, and can aid us materially, if you will. What say you, chief; will you take service, once more, under your old commander?"

"Who *he* sarve—King George—Congress—eh?"

"Neither. I am neutral, Tuscarora, in the present quarrel. I only defend myself, and the rights which the laws assure to me, let whichever party govern, that may."

"Dat bad. Nebber neutral in hot war. Get rob from bot' side. Always be one or t'oder, cap'in."

"You may be right, Nicholas, but a conscientious man may think neither wholly right nor wholly wrong. I wish never to lift the hatchet, unless my quarrel be just."

"Injin no understand *dat*. Throw hatchet at *enemy*—what matter what he say—good t'ing, bad t'ing. He *enemy*—dat enough. Take scalp from *enemy*—don't touch *friend*."

"That may do for *your* mode of warfare, Tuscarora, but it will hardly do for *mine*. I must feel that I have right on my side, before I am willing to take life."

"Cap'in always talk so, eh? When he soldier, and general say shoot ten, forty, t'ousand Frenchmen, den he say; 'Stop, general—no hurry—let cap'in t'ink.' By em by he'll go and take scalp; eh!"

It exceeded our old soldier's self-command not to permit the blood to rush into his face, at this home-thrust; for he felt the cunning of the Indian had involved him in a seeming contradiction.

"That was when I was in the army, Wyandotte," he answered, notwithstanding his confusion, "when my first and highest duty was to obey the orders of my superiors. Then I acted as a soldier; now, I hope to act as a man."

"Well, Indian chief always in army. Always high duty, and obey superior—obey Manitou, and take scalp from enemy. War-path always open, when enemy at t'other end."

"This is no place to discuss such questions, chief; nor have we the time. Do you go with us?"

Nick nodded an assent, and signed for

the other to quit the rocks. The captain hesitated a moment, during which he stood intently studying the scene in the clearing.

"What say you, Tuscarora; the sergeant has proposed assaulting that breast-work?"

"No good, cap'in. You fire, halloo, rush on—well, kill four, six, two—rest run away. Injin down at mill hear rifle; follow smoke—where major, den? Get major, first—t'ink about enemy afterward."

As Nick said this he repeated the gesture to descend; and he was obeyed in silence. The captain now led the way back to his party; and soon rejoined it. All were glad to see Nick, for he was known to have a sure rifle; to be fearless as the turkey-cock; and to possess a sagacity in the woods that frequently amounted to a species of intuition.

"Who lead, cap'in or Injin?" asked the Tuscarora, in his sententious manner.

"Och, Nick, ye're a cr'ature!" muttered Mike. "Divil bur-r-rn me, Jamie, but I t'inks the fallie would crass the very three-tops rather than miss the majjor's habitation."

"Not a syllable must be uttered," said the captain, raising a hand in remonstrance. "I will lead, and Wyandotte will march by my side, and give me his counsel in whispers. Joyce will bring up the rear. Blodget, you will keep a sharp lookout to the left, while Jamie will do the same to the right. As we approach the mills, stragglers may be met in the woods, and our march must be conducted with the greatest caution. Now follow, and be silent."

The captain and Nick led, and the whole party followed, observing the silence which had been enjoined on them. The usual manner of marching on a war-path, in the woods, was for the men to follow each other singly; an order that has obtained the name of "Indian file," the object being to diminish the trail, and conceal the force of the expedition, by each man treading in his leader's footsteps. On the present occasion, however, the captain induced Nick to walk at his side, feeling an uneasiness on the subject of Tuscarora's fidelity that he could not entirely conquer. The pretext given was very different as the reader will suppose. By seeing the print of a moccasin in company with that of a boot, any straggler that crossed the trail might be led to suppose it had been left by the passage of a party from the clearing or the mill. Nick quietly assented to this reasoning, and fell in by the side of the captain without remonstrance.

Vigilant eyes were kept on all sides of the line of march, though it was hoped and believed that the adventurers had struck upon a route too far west to be exposed to interruption. A quarter of a mile nearer the flats might have brought them within range of stragglers; but, following the summit of the ridge, there was a certain security in the indolence which would be apt to prevent mere idlers from sauntering up an ascent. At all events no interruption occurred, the party reaching in safety the rocks that were a continuation of the range which formed the precipice at the falls—the sign that they had gone far enough to the south. At this period, the precipice was nearly lost in the rising of the lower land, but its margin was sufficiently distinct to form a good mask.

Descending to the plateau beneath, the captain and Nick now inclined to the east, the intention being to come in upon the mills from the rear. As the buildings lay in the ravine, this could only be done by making a rapid descent immediately in their vicinity; a formation of the ground that rendered the march, until within pistol shot of its termination, reasonably secure. Nick also assured his companions that he had several times traversed this very plateau, and that he had met no signs of footsteps on it; from which he inferred that the invaders had not taken the trouble to ascend the rugged cliffs that bounded the western side of the glen.

The approach to the summit of the cliff was made with caution, though the left flank of the adventurers was well protected by the abrupt descent they had already made from the terrace above. This

left little more than the right flank and the front to be watched, the falling away of the land forming also a species of cover for the rear. It is not surprising, then, that the verge of the ravine or glen was attained, and no discovery was made. The spot being favorable, the captain immediately led down a winding path, that was densely fringed with bushes, toward the level of the buildings.

The glen of the mills was very narrow; so much so, as barely to leave sites for the buildings themselves, and three or four cabins for the workmen. The mills were placed in advance, as near as possible to the course of the water; while the habitations of the workmen were perched on shelves of the rocks, or such level bits of bottom-land as offered. Owing to this last circumstance, the house of Daniel the miller, or that in which it was supposed the major was still confined, stood by itself, and fortunately, at the very foot of the path by which the adventurers were descending. All this was favorable, and had been taken into the account as a material advantage by Captain Willoughby, when he originally conceived the plan of the present sortie.

When the chimney of the cabin was visible over the bushes, Captain Willoughby halted his party, and repeated his instructions to Joyce, in a voice very little raised above a whisper. The sergeant was ordered to remain in his present position until he received a signal to advance. As for the captain himself, he intended to descend as near as might be to the buttery of the cabin, and reconnoiter, before he gave the final order. This buttery was in a lean-to, as a small addition to the original building was called in the parlance of the country; and, the object being shade and coolness, on account of the milk with which it was usually well-stored at this season of the year, it projected back to the very cliff, where it was half hid in bushes and young trees. It had but a single small window, that was barred with wood to keep out cats, and such wild vermin as affected milk, nor was it either lathed or plastered; these two last being luxuries not often known in the log tenements of the frontier. Still it was of solid logs, chinked in with mortar, and made a very effectual prison, with the door properly guarded; the captive being deprived of edged tools. All this was also known to the father, when he set forth to effect the liberation of his son, and, like the positions of the buildings themselves, had been well weighed in his estimate of the probabilities and chances.

As soon as his orders were given, Captain Willoughby proceeded down the path accompanied only by Nick. He had announced his intention to send the Tuscarora ahead to reconnoiter, then to force himself among the bushes between the lean-to and the rocks, and there to open a communication with the major through the chinks of the logs. After receiving Nick's intelligence, his plan was to be governed by circumstances, and to act accordingly.

"God bless you, Joyce," said the captain, squeezing the sergeant's hand as he was on the point of descending. "We are on ticklish service, and require all our wits about us. If anything happens to me, remember that my wife and daughter will mainly depend on you for protection."

"I shall consider that as your honor's orders, sir, and no more need be said to me, Captain Willoughby."

The captain smiled on his old follower, and Joyce thought that never had he seen the fine, manly face of his superior beam with a calmer or sweeter expression than it did as he returned his own pressure of the hand. The two adventurers were both careful, and their descent was noiseless. The men above listened in breathless silence, but the stealthy approach of the cat upon the bird could not have been more still than that of these two experienced warriors.

The place where Joyce was left with the men might have been fifty feet above the roof of the cabin, and almost perpendicularly over the narrow vacancy that was known to exist between the rocks and the lean-to. Still, the bushes and trees were so thick as to prevent the smallest glimpse at objects below, had the shape of the cliff

allowed it, while they even intercepted sounds. Joyce fancied, nevertheless, that he heard the rustling bushes, as the captain forced his way into the narrow space he was to occupy, and he augured well of the fact, since it proved that no opposition had been encountered.

Half an hour of forest silence followed, that was only interrupted by the tumbling of the waters over the natural dam. At the end of that weary period a shout was heard in front of the mills, and the party raised their pieces, in a vague apprehension that some discovery had been made that was about to bring on a crisis. Nothing further occurred, however, to confirm this impression, and an occasional burst of laughter, that evidently came from white men, rather served to allay the aprehension. Another half hour passed, during which no interruption was heard. By this time Joyce became uneasy, a state of things having arrived for which no provision had been made in his instructions. He was about to leave his command under the charge of Jamie, and descend himself to reconnoiter, when a footstep was heard coming up the path. Nothing but the deep attention and breathless stillness of the men could have rendered the sound of a tread so nearly noiseless, audible; but heard it was, at a moment when every sense was wrought up to its greatest powers. Rifles were lowered, in readinesss to receive assailants, but each was raised again, as Nick came slowly into view. The Tuscarora was calm in manner, as if no incident had occurred to disconcert the arrangement, though his eyes glanced around him, like those of a man who searched for an absent person.

"Where cap'in? Where major?" Nick asked, as soon as his glance had taken in the faces of all present.

"We must ask that of you, Nick," returned Joyce. "We have not seen the captain, nor had any orders from him since he left us."

This answer seemed to cause the Indian more surprise than it was usual for him to betray, and he pondered a moment in obvious uneasiness.

"Can't stay here alway," he muttered. "Best go see. By em by trouble come; then, too late."

The sergeant was greatly adverse to moving without orders. He had his instructions how to act on every probable contingency, but none that covered the case of absolute inaction on the part of those below. Nevertheless, twice the time necessary to bring things to issue had gone by, and neither signal, shot, nor alarm had reached his ears.

"Do you know anything of the major, Nick?" the sergeant demanded, determined to examine the case throughly ere he came to a decision.

"Major, dere—see him at door—plenty sentinel. All good—where cap'in?"

"Where did you leave him? You can give the last account of him."

"Go in behind cupboard—under rock—plenty bushes—all right—son dere."

"This must be looked to—perhaps his honor has fallen into a fit—such things sometimes happen—and a man who is fighting for his own child doesn't feel, Jamie, all the same as one who fights on a general principle, as it might be."

"Na—ye're right, Sairgeant J'yce, and ye'll be doing the kind and prudent act to gang doon yersal', and investigate the transaction with yer ain een."

This Joyce determined to do, directing Nick to accompany him, as a guide. The Indian seemed glad to comply, and there was no delay in proceeding. It required but a minute to reach the narrow passage between the cliff and the lean-to. The bushes were carefully shoved aside, and Joyce entered. He soon caught a glimpse of the hunting shirt, and then he was about to withdraw, believing that he was in error, in anticipating orders. But a short look at his commander removed all scruples; for he observed that he was seated on a projection of the rocks, with his body bowed forward, apparently leaning on the logs of the building. This seemed to corroborate the thought about a fit, and the sergeant pressed eagerly forward to ascertain the truth.

Joyce touched his commander's arm, but no sign of consciousness came from the

latter. He then raised his body upright, placing the back in a reclining attitude against the rocks, and started back himself when he caught a glimpse of the death-like hue of the face. At first, the notion of the fit was strong with the sergeant; but, in changing his own position, he caught a glimpse of a little pool of blood, which at once announced that violence had been used.

Although the sergeant was a man of great steadiness of nerves and unchangeable method, he fairly trembled as he ascertained the serious condition of his old and well-beloved commander. Notwithstanding, he was too much of a soldier to neglect anything that circumstances required. On examination, he discovered a deep and fatal wound between two of the ribs, which had evidently been inflicted with a common knife. The blow had passed into the heart, and Captain Willoughby was, out of all question, dead! He had breathed his last within six feet of his own gallant son, who, ignorant of all that had passed, was little dreaming of the proximity of one so dear to him, as well as of his dire condition.

Joyce was a man of powerful frame, and, at that moment, he felt he was master of a giant's strength. First assuring himself of the fact that the wounded man had certainly ceased to breathe, he brought the arms over his own shoulders, raised the body on his back, and walked from the place, with less attention to caution than on entering, but with sufficient care to prevent exposure. Nick stood watching his movements with a wondering look, and as soon as there was room, he aided in supporting the corpse.

In this matter the two went up the path, bearing their senseless burden. A gesture directed the party with Jamie to precede the two who had been below, and the sergeant did not pause, even to breathe, until he had fairly reached the summit of the cliff; then he halted in a place removed from the danger of immediate discovery. The body was laid reverently on the ground, and Joyce renewed his examination with greater ease and accuracy, until perfectly satisfied that the captain must have ceased to breathe nearly an hour.

This was a sad and fearful blow to the whole party. No one, at such a moment, thought of inquiring into the manner in which their excellent master had received his death-blow; but every thought was bent either on the extent of the calamity, or on the means of getting back to the Hut. Joyce was the soul of the party. His rugged face assumed a stern, commanding expression; but every sign of weakness had disappeared. He gave his orders promptly and the men even started when he spoke, so bent on obtaining obedience did he appear to be.

The rifles were converted into a bier, the body was placed upon it, and the four men then raised the burden, and began to retrace their footsteps, in melancholy silence. Nick led the way, pointing out the difficulties of the path, with a sedulousness of attention and gentleness of manner that none present had ever before witnessed in the Tuscarora. He even appeared to have become woman, to use one of his own peculiar expressions.

No one speaking, and all the men working with good will, the retreat, notwithstanding the burden with which it was encumbered, was made with a rapidity greatly exceeding the advance. Nick led the way with an unerring eye, even selecting better ground than that which the white men had been able to find on their march. He had often traversed all the hills, in the character of a hunter, and to him the avenues of the forest were as familiar as the streets of his native town become to the burgher. He made no offer to become one of the bearers; this would have been opposed to his habits; but in all else, the Indian manifested gentleness and solicitude. His apprehension seemed to be, and so he expressed it, that the Mohawks might get the scalp of the dead man—a disgrace that he seemed as solicitous to avoid as Joyce himself; the sergeant, however, keeping in view the feelings of the survivors, rather than any notions of military pride.

Notwithstanding the stern resolution

that prevailed among the men, that return march was long and weary. The distance, of itself, exceeded two miles, and there were the inequalities and obstacles of a forest to oppose them. Perseverance and strength, however, overcame all difficulties; at the end of two hours the party approached the point where it became necessary to enter the bed of the rivulet, or expose their sad procession by marching in open view of any who might be straggling in the rear of the Hut. A species of desperate determination had influenced the men in their return march, rendering them reckless of discovery, or its consequences; a circumstance that had greatly favored their object; the adventurous and bold frequently encountering fewer difficulties in the affairs of war than the cautious and timid. But an embarrassment now presented itself that was far more difficult to encounter than any which proceeded from personal risks. The loving family of the deceased was to be met; a wife and daughters apprised of the fearful loss that, in the providence of God, had suddenly alighted on their house.

"Lower the body, men, and come to a halt," said Joyce, using the manner of authority, though his voice trembled; "we must consult together as to our next step."

There was a brief and decent pause, while the party placed the lifeless body on the grass, face uppermost, with the limbs laid in order, and everything about it disposed of in a seemliness that betokened profound respect for the senseless clay, even after the noble spirit had departed. Mike alone could not resist his strong native propensity to talk. The honest fellow raised a hand of his late master, and, kissing it with strong affection, soliloquized as follows, in a tone that was more rebuked by feeling, than any apprehension of consequences:

"Little need had ye of a praist, and extreme unction," he said. "The likes of yerself always kapes a clane breast; and the knife that went into yer heart found nothing that ye need have been ashamed of! Sorrow come over me, but yer lass is as great a one to meself as if I had tidings of the sinking of ould Ireland into the salt say, itself; a thing that never can happen, and niver will happen; no, not even at the last day; as all agree the wor-r-ld is to be burned and not drowned. And who'll there be to tell this same to the missus, and Miss Beuly, the phratty Miss Maud, and the babby, in the bargain? Divil bur-r-n me, if 'twill be Michael O'Hearn, who has too much sorrow of his own, to be running about, and d'aling it out to other people. Sargeant, that will be yer own jewty, and I pities the man that has to perform it."

"No man will see me shrink from a duty, O'Hearn," said Joyce, stiffly, while with the utmost difficulty he kept the tears from breaking out of a fountain that had not opened in this way for twenty years. "It may bear hard on my feelings—I do not say it will not—but duty is duty, and it must be done. Corporal Allen, you see the state of things; the commanding officer is among the casualties, and nothing would be simpler than our course, were it not for Madam Willoughby—God bless her, and have her in His holy keeping—and the young ladies. It is proper to deliberate a little about them. To you, then, as an elderly and experienced man, I first apply for an opinion."

"Sorrow's an unwelcome guest, whether it comes expected, or without any previous knowledge. The hairts of the widow and faitherless must be stricken, and it's little that a' our consolations and expairiments will prevail ag'in the feelin's o' natur'. Pheelosophy and religion tell us that the body's no mair than a clod o' the valley when the speerit has fled; but the hairt is unapt to listen to wisdom while the grief is fraish, and of the severity of an unlooked-for sairtainty. I see little good, therefore, in doing mair than just sending in a messenger to clear the way a little for the arrival of truth, in the form o' death itsel'."

"I have been thinking of this—will you take the office, Jamie, as a man of years and discretion?"

"Na—na—ye'll be doing far better by sending a younger man. Age has weakened my memory, and I'll be overlooking

some of the saircumstances in a manner that will be unseemly for the occasion. Here is Blodget, a youth of ready wit and limber tongue."

"I wouldn't do it, mason, to be the owner of ten such properties as this!" exclaimed the young Rhode Islander, actually recoiling a step, as if he retreated before a dreaded foe.

"Well, sairgeant, ye've Michael here, who belangs to a kirk that has so little seempathy with protestantism as to lessen the pain o' the office. Death is a near ally to religion, and Michael, by taking a religious view of the maither, might bring his hairt into such a condition of insensibility as wad give him little to do but to tell what has happened, leaving God, in his ain mairey, to temper the wind to the shorn lamb."

"You hear, O'Hearn?" said the sergeant, stiffly—"Everybody seems to expect that you will do this duty."

"Jewty! D'ye call it a jewty for a man in my situation to break the hearts of Missus and Miss Beuly, and phratty Miss Maud, and the babby? for babbies has hearts as well as the stoutest man as is going. Divil bur-r-n me, then, if ye gets out of my mout' so much as a hint that the captain's dead and gone from us, forever and ever, amen! Ye may send me in, for ye're corporals, and sergeants, and the likes of yees, and I'll obey as a souldier, seein' that he would have wished as much himself, had the breat' stayed in his body, which it has not, on account of its l'aving his sowl on 'arth, and departing with his corporeal part for the mansions of happiness, the Blessed Mary have mercy on him, whether here or there—but the captain was not the man to wish a fait'ful follower to afflict his own wife; and so I'll have nothin' to do with such a message at all at all."

"Nick go"—said the Indian calmly—"Used to carry message—carry him for cap'in, once more."

"Well, Nick, you may do it certainly, if so disposed," answered Joyce, who would have accepted the services of a Chinese rather than undertake the office in person. "You will remember and speak to the ladies gently, and not break the news too suddenly."

"Yes—squaw soft heart—Nick know—had moder — had wife, once — had darter."

"Very well; this will be an advantage, men, as Nick is the only married man among us; and married men should best understand dealing with females."

Joyce then held a private communication with the Tuscarora, that lasted five or six minutes, when the last leaped nimbly into the bed of the stream, and was soon concealed by the bushes of one of its reaches.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Heart leaps to heart—the sacred flood
That warms us is the same;
That good old man—his honest blood
Alike we fondly claim."—SPRAGUE.

ALTHOUGH Nick commenced his progress with so much seeming zeal and activity, his speed abated the moment he found himself beyond the sight of those he had left in the woods. Before he reached the foot of the cliff his trot had degenerated to a walk; and when he actually found he was at its base, he seated himself on a stone, apparently to reflect on the course he ought to pursue.

The countenance of the Tuscarora expressed a variety of emotions while he thus remained stationary. At first, it was fierce, savage, exulting; then it became gentler, soft, perhaps repentant. He drew his knife from its buckskin sheath, and eyed the blade with a gaze expressive of uneasiness. Perceiving that a clot of blood had collected at the junction with the handle, it was carefully removed by the use of water. His look next passed over his whole person, in order to ascertain if any more of these betrayers of his fearful secret remained; after which he seemed more at ease.

"Wyandotte's back don't ache now," he growled to himself. "Ole sore heal up. Why cap'in touch him? T'ink Injin no got feelin'? Good man, sometimes; bad man, sometime. Sometime, live; sometime, die. Why tell Wyandotte

he flog ag'in, just as go to enemy's camp? No; back feel well now—nebber smart any more."

When this soliloquy was ended, Nick arose, cast a look up at the sun, to ascertain how much of the day still remained, glanced toward the Hut, as if examining the nature of its defenses, stretched himself like one who was weary, and peeped out from behind the bushes, in order to see how those who were afield still occupied themselves. All this done, with singular deliberation and steadiness, he arranged his light dress, and prepared to present himself before the wife and daughters of the man whom, three hours before, he had remorselessly murdered. Nick had often meditated this treacherous deed, during the thirty years which had elapsed between his first flogging and the present period; but circumstances had never placed its execution safely in his power. The subsequent punishments had increased the desire, for a few years; but time had so far worn off the craving for revenge that it would never have been actively revived, perhaps, but for the unfortunate allusions of the victim himself to the subject. Captain Willoughby had been an English soldier, of the school of the last century. He was naturally a humane and just man, but he believed in the military axiom, that "the most flogging regiments were the best fighting regiments;" and perhaps he was not in error, as regards the lower English character. It was a fatal error, however, to make in relation to an American savage; one who had formerly exercised the functions, and who had not lost all the feelings, of a chief. Unhappily, at a moment when everything depended on the fidelity of the Tuscarora, the captain had bethought him of his old expedient for insuring prompt obedience, and, by way of reminder, he made an allusion to his former mode of punishment. As Nick would have expressed it, "the old sores smarted"; the wavering purpose of thirty years was suddenly and fiercely revived, and the knife passed into the heart of the victim with a rapidity that left no time for appeals to the tribunal of God's mercy. In half a minute, Captain Willoughby had ceased to breathe.

Such had been the act of the man who now passed through the opening of the palisade, and entered the former habitation of his victim. A profound stillness reigned in and around the Hut, and no one appeared to question the unexpected intruder. Nick passed, with his noiseless step, round to the gate, which he found secured. It was necessary to knock, and this he did in a way effectually to bring a porter.

"Who dere?" demanded the elder Pliny, from within.

"Good friend—open the gate. Come wid message from cap'in."

The natural distaste to the Indians which existed among the blacks of the Knoll, included the Tuscarora. This disgust was mingled with a degree of dread; and it was difficut for beings so untutored and ignorant, at all times to draw the proper distinctions between Indian and Indian. In their wonder-loving imagination, Oneidas, Tuscaroras, Mohawks, Onondagas, and Iroquois were all jumbled together in inextricable confusion, a red man being a red man, and a savage a savage. It is not surprising, therefore, that Pliny the elder should hesitate about opening the gate, and admitting one of the detested race, though a man so well known to them all, in the peculiar situation of the family. Luckily, Great Smash happened to be near, and her husband called her to the gate by one of the signals that was much practiced between them."

"Who you t'ink out dere?" asked Pliny the elder of his consort, with a very significant look.

"How you t'ink guess, ole Plin? You 'spose nigger wench like Albonny wise woman, dat she see t'rough a gate, and know ebbery t'ing, and little more!"

"Well, dat Sassy Nick? What you say now?"

"You sartain, ole Plin?" asked Mistress Smash, with a face ominous of evil.

"Sartain as ear. Talk wid him—he want to come in. What you t'ink?"

"Nebber open gate, ole Plin, till mistress tell you. You stay here—dere; lean

agi'n gate wid all you' might, dere; nowI go call Miss Maud. She all alone in librarim, and will know what best. Mind you lean agi'n gate well, ole Plin."

Pliny the elder nodded assent, placed his shoulder resolutely against the massive timbers, and stood propping a defense that would have made a respectable resistence to a battering-ram, like another Atlas, upholding a world. His duty was short, however, his "lady" soon returning with Maud, who was hastening breathlessly to learn the news."

"Is it you, Nick?" called out the sweet voice of our heroine through the crevices of the timber.

The Tuscarora started, as he so unexpectedly heard those familiar sounds; for an instant his look was dark; then the expression changed to pity and concern, and his reply was given with less than usual of the abrupt, guttural brevity that belonged to his habits.

"'Tis Nick—Sassy Nick—Wyandotte, Flower of the Woods," for so the Indian often termed Maud. "Got news—cap'in send him. Meet party and go along. Nobody here; only Wyandotte. Nick see major, too—say somet'ing to young squaw."

This decided the matter. The gate was unbarred, and Nick in the court in half a minute. Great Smash stole a glance without, and beckoned Pliny the elder to join her, in order to see the extraordinary spectacle of Joel and his associates toiling in the fields. When they drew in their heads, Maud and her companion were already in the library. The message from Robert Willoughby had induced our heroine to seek this room; for, placing little confidence in the delicacy of the messenger, she recoiled from listening to his words in the presence of others.

But Nick was in no haste to speak. He took the chair to which Maud motioned, and he sat looking at her, in a way that soon excited her alarm.

"Tell me, if your heart has any mercy in it, Wyandotte, has aught happened to Major Willoughby?"

"He well—laugh, talk, feel good. Mind not'ing. He prisoner; don't touch he scalp."

"Why, then, do you wear so ominous a look—your face is the very harbinger of evil."

"Bad news, if trut' must come. What you' name, young squaw?"

"Surely, surely, you must know that well, Nick! I am Maud—your old friend, Maud."

"Pale face hab two name—Tuscarora got t'ree. Sometime, Nick—sometime, Sassy Nick—sometime, Wyandotte."

"You know my name is Maud Willoughby," returned our heroine, coloring to the temples with a certain secret consciousness of her error, but preferring to keep up old appearances.

"Dat call you' fader's name, Meredit'; no Willoughby."

"Merciful Providence! and has this great secret been known to you, too, Nick?"

"He no secret—know all about him. Wyandotte dere. See Major Meredit' shot. He good chief—nebber flog—nebber strike Injin. Nick know fader, know moder—know squaw, when pappoose."

"And why have you chosen this particular moment to tell me all this? Has it any relation to your message—to Bob—to Major Willoughby, I mean?" demanded Maud, nearly gasping for breath.

"No relation, tell you," said Nick, a little angrily. "Why make relation, when no relation at all. Meredit'—no Willoughby. Ask moder; ask major; ask chaplain—all tell trut'! No need to be so feelin'; no you' fader, at all."

"What can you—what do you mean, Nick? Why do you look so wild—so fierce—so kind—so sorrowful—so angry? You must have bad news to tell me."

"Why bad to you—he no fader—only fader friend. You can't help it; fader die when you pappoose. Why you care, now, for dis?"

Maud now actually gasped for breath. A frightful glimpse of the truth gleamed before her imagination, though it was necessarily veiled in the midst of uncertainty. She became pale as death, and pressed her hand upon her heart, as if to

still its beating. Then, by a desperate effort, she became more calm, and obtained the power to speak.

"Oh! is it so, Nick!—can it be so!" she said; "my father has fallen in this dreadful business?"

"Fader kill twenty years ago; tell you dat, how often?" answered the Tuscarora, angrily; for, in his anxiety to lessen the shock to Maud, for whom this wayward savage had a strange sentiment of affection, that had grown out of her gentle kindness to himself, on a hundred occasions, he fancied if she knew that Captain Willoughby was not actually her father, her grief at his loss would be less. "Why you call dis fader, when that fader? Nick know fader and moder. Major no broder."

Notwithstanding the sensations that nearly pressed her to the earth, the tell-tale blood rushed to Maud's cheeks again at this allusion, and she bowed her face to her knees. The action gave her time to rally her faculties; and, catching a glimpse of the vast importance to all for her maintaining self-command, she was enabled to raise her face with something like the fortitude the Indian hoped to see.

"Trifle with me no longer, Wyandotte, but let me know the worst at once. Is my father dead? By father I mean Captain Willoughby?"

"Mean wrong, den—no fader—tell you. Why young squaw so much like Mohawk?"

"Man, is Captain Willoughby killed?"

Nick gazed intently into Maud's face for half a minute, and then he nodded an assent. Notwithstanding all her resolutions to be steady, our heroine nearly sank under the blow. For ten minutes she spoke not, but sat, her head bowed to her knees, in a confusion of thought that threatened a temporary loss of reason. Happily, a flood of tears relieved her, and she became more calm. Then the necessity of knowing more, in order that she might act intelligently, occurred to her mind, and she questioned Nick in a way to elicit all it suited the savage to reveal.

Maud's first impulse was to go out to meet the body of the captain, and to ascertain for herself that there was actually no longer any hope. Nick's account had been so laconic as to leave much obscurity, and the blow had been so sudden she could hardly credit the truth in its full extent. Still, there remained the dreadful tidings to be communicated to those dear beings, who, while they feared so much, had never anticipated a calamity like this. Even Mrs. Willoughby, sensitive as she was, and wrapped up in those she loved so entirely, as she was habitually, had been so long accustomed to see and know of her husband's exposing himself with impunity, as to begin to feel, if not to think, that he bore a charmed life. All this customary confidence was to be overcome, and the truth was to be said. Tell the fact to her mother, Maud felt that she could not then; scarcely under any circumstances would she have consented to perform this melancholy office; but, so long as a shadow of doubt remained on the subject of her father's actual decease, it seemed cruel even to think of it. Her decision was to send for Beulah, and it was done by means of one of the negresses.

So long as we feel that there are others to be sustained by our fortitude, even the feeblest possess a firmness to which they might otherwise be strangers. Maud, contrary to what her delicate but active frame and sweetness of disposition might seem to indicate, was a young woman capable of the boldest exertions, short of taking human life. Her frontier training had raised her above most of the ordinary weakness of her sex, and so far as determination went, few men were capable of higher resolution, when circumstances called for its display. Her plan was now made up to go forth and meet the body, and nothing short of a command from her mother could have stopped her. In this frame of mind was our heroine, when Beulah made her appearance.

"Maud!" exclaimed the youthful matron, "what has happened?—why are you so pale?—why send for me? Does Nick bring us any tidings from the mill?"

"The worst possible, Beulah. My father—my dear, dear father is hurt. They have borne him as far as the edge

of the woods, where they have halted, in order not to take us by surprise. I am going to meet the—to meet the men, and to bring father in. You must prepare mother for the sad, sad tidings; yes, Beulah, for the worst, as everything depends on the wisdom and goodness of God!"

"Oh! Maud, this is dreadful!" exclaimed the sister, sinking into a chair. "What will become of mother—of little Evert—of us all?"

"The providence of the Ruler of heaven and earth will care for us. Kiss me, dear sister—how cold you are—rouse yourself, Beulah, for mother's sake. Think how much more she must feel than we possibly can, and then be resolute."

"Yes, Maud—very true—no woman can feel like a wife unless it be a mother—"

Here Beulah's words were stopped by her fainting.

"You see, Smash," said Maud, pointing to her sister with a strange resolution, "she must have air, and a little water—and she has salts about her, I know. Come, Nick, we have no more time to waste—you must be my guide."

The Tuscarora had been a silent observer of this scene, and if it did not awaken remorse in his bosom, it aroused feelings that had never before been its inmate. The sight of two such beings suffering under a blow that his own hand had struck was novel to him, and he knew not which to encourage most, the sentiment allied to regret, or a fierce resentment, that any should dare thus to reproach, though it were only by yielding to the grief natural to their situation. But Maud had obtained a command over him that he knew not how to resist, and he followed her from the room, keeping his eyes riveted the while on the pallid face of Beulah. The last was recalled from her insensibility, however, in the course of a few minutes through the practiced attentions of the negresses.

Maud waited for nothing. Motioning impatiently for the Tuscarora to lead the way, she glided after him with a rapidity that equaled his own loping movement. She made no difficulties in passing the stockade, though Nick kept his eyes on the laborers, and felt assured that their *exit* was not noticed. Once by the path that led along the rivulet, Maud refused all precautions, but passed swiftly over it, partially concealed by its bushes. Her dress was dark, and left little liability to exposure. As for Nick, his forest attire, like the hunting-shirt of the whites, was expressly regulated by the wish to go to and fro unseen.

In less than three minutes after the Indian and Maud had passed the gate, they were drawing near to the melancholy group that had halted in the forest. Our heroine was recognized as she approached, and when she came rushing up to the spot, all made way, allowing her to fall upon her knees by the side of the lifeless body, bathing the placid face of the dead with her tears, and covering it with kisses.

"Is there no hope, oh! Joyce," she cried, "can it be possible that my father is actually dead?"

"I fear, Miss Maud, that his honor has made his last march. He has received orders to go hence, and, like a gallant soldier as he was, he has obeyed, without a murmur," answered the sergeant, endeavoring to appear firm and soldier-like himself. "We have lost a noble and humane commander, and you a most excellent and tender father."

"No fader," growled Nick, at the sergeant's elbow, twitching his sleeve at the same time, to attract attention. "Sergeant know her fader. He by; I by, when Iroquois shoot him."

"I do not understand you, Tuscarora, nor do I think you altogether understand us; the less you say, therefore, the better for all parties. It is our duty, Miss Maud, to say 'God's will be done,' and the soldier who dies in the discharge of his duty is never to be pitied. I sincerely wish that the Rev. Mr. Woods was here; he would tell you all this in a manner that would admit of no dispute; as for myself, I am a plain man, Miss Maud, and my tongue cannot utter one-half that my heart feels at this instant."

"Ah! Joyce, what a friend—what a parent has it pleased God to call to himself!"

"Yes, Miss Maud, that may be said with great justice—if his honor has left us in obedience to general orders, it is to meet promotion in a service that will never weary, and never end."

"So kind; so true; so gentle; so just; so affectionate!" said Maud, wringing her hands.

"And so brave, young lady. His honor, Captain Willoughby, wasn't one of them that is always talking, and writing, and boasting about fighting; but when anything was to be done, the colonel always knew whom to send on the duty. The army couldn't have lost a braver gentleman, had he remained in it."

"Oh! my father—my father,"—cried Maud, in bitterness of sorrow, throwing herself on the body and embracing it, as had been her wont in childhood—"would that I could have died for you!"

"Why you let go on so!" grumbled Nick, again. "No her fader—you know dat, sergeant."

Joyce was not in a state to answer. His own feelings had been kept in subjection only by military pride, but they now had become so nearly uncontrollable, that he found himself obliged to step a little aside, in order to conceal his weakness. As it was, large tears trickled down his rugged face, like water flowing from the fissures of the riven oak. Jamie Allen's constitutional prudence, however, now became active, admonishing the party of the necessity of their getting within the protection of the Hut.

"Death is at a' times awfu'," said the mason, "but it must befall young and auld alike. And the affliction it brings cometh fra' the heart, and is a submission to the la' o' nature. Nevertheless we a' hae our duties, so long as we remain in the flesh, and it is time to be thinking o' carryin' the body into some place o' safety, while we hae a prudent regard to our ain conditions also."

Maud had risen, and, hearing this appeal, she drew back meekly, assumed a manner of forced composure, and signed to the men to proceed. On this intimation, the body was raised, and the melancholy procession resumed its march.

For the purpose of concealment, Joyce led the way into the bed of the stream, leaving Maud waiting their movements, a little deeper within the forest. As soon as he and his fellow-bearers were in the water, Joyce turned and desired Nick to escort the young lady in again on dry land, or by the path along which she had come out. This said, the sergeant and his companions proceeded. Maud stood gazing on the sad spectacle like one entranced, until she felt a sleeve pulled, and perceived Tuscarora at her side,

"No go to Hut," said Nick, earnestly; "go wid Wyandotte."

"Not follow my dear father's remains—not go to my beloved mother in her anguish! You know not what you ask, Indian—move, and let me proceed."

"No go home—no use—no good. Cap'-in dead—what do widout commander? Come wid Wyandotte—find major—den do some good."

Maud fairly started in her surprise. There seemed something so truly useful, so consoling, so dear in this proposal, that it instantly caught her ear.

"Find the major!" she answered. "Is that possible, Nick? My poor father perished in making that attempt—what hope can there be then for my success?"

"Plenty hope—much as want—all want. Come wid Wyandotte—he great chief—show young squaw where to find broder."

Here was a touch of Nick's consummate art. He knew the female bosom so well that he avoided any allusion to his knowledge of the real relation between Robert Willoughby and Maud, though he had so recently urged her want of natural affinity to the family as a reason why she should not grieve. By keeping the major before her eyes as a brother, the chances of his own success were greatly increased. As for Maud, a tumult of feeling came over her heart at this extraordinary proposal. To liberate Bob, to lead him into the Hut, to offer his manly protection to her mother, and Beulah, and little Evert, at such an instant, caught her imagination, and appealed to all her affections.

"Can you do this, Tuscarora?" she

asked, earnestly, pressing her hand on her heart as if to quiet its throbbings. "Can you really lead me to Major Willoughby, so that I may have some hope of liberating him?"

"Sartain—you go, he come. I go, he no come. Don't love Nick—t'ink all Injin, one Injin—t'ink one Injin, all Injin. You go, he come—he stay, find more knife, and die like cap'in. Young squaw follow Wyandotte, and see."

Maud needed no more. To save the life of Bob, her well-beloved, he who had so long been beloved in secret, she would have gone with one far less known and trusted than the Tuscarora. She made an eager gesture for him to proceed, and they were soon on their way to the mill, threading the mazes of the forest.

Nick was far from observing the precautions that had been taken by the captain in his unfortunate march out. Acquainted with every inch of ground in the vicinity of the Dam, and an eye-witness of the dispositions of the invaders, he had no occasion for making the long *détour* already described, but went to work in a much more direct manner. Instead of circling the valley, and the clearing, to the westward, he turned short in a contrary direction, crossed the rivulet on the fallen tree, and led the way along the eastern margin of the flats. On this side of the valley he knew there were no enemies, and the position of the huts and barns enabled him to follow a path that was just deep enough in the forest to conceal his movements. By taking this course, besides having the advantage of a clear and beaten path most of the way, the Tuscarora brought the whole distance within a mile.

As for Maud, she asked no questions, solicited no pauses, manifested no physical weakness. Actively as the Indian moved among the trees, she kept close in his footsteps; and she had scarcely begun to reflect on the real nature of the undertaking in which she was engaged, when the roar of the rivulet, and the formation of the land, told her they had reached the edge of the glen below the mills. Here Nick told her to remain stationary a moment, while he advanced to a covered point of the rocks to reconnoiter. This was the place where the Indian made his first observations of the invaders of the valley, ascertaining their real character before he trusted his person among them. On the present occasion, his object was to see if all remained in and about the mills as when he had last left the spot. "Come"—said Nick, signing for Maud to follow him—"we go—fools sleep, and eat, and talk. Major prisoner now; half an hour, major free."

This was enough for the ardent, devoted, generous-hearted Maud. She descended the path before her as swiftly as her guide could lead, and, in five more minutes, they reached the bank of the stream, in the glen, at a point where a curvature hid the rivulet from those at the mill. Here an enormous pine had been laid across the torrent; and, flattened on its surface, it made a secure bridge for those who were sure of foot and steady of eye. Nick glanced back at his companion as he stepped upon this bridge, to ascertain if she were equal to crossing it, a single glance sufficing to tell him apprehensions were unnecessary. Half a minute placed both in safety on the western bank.

"Good!" muttered the Indian; "young squaw make wife for warrior."

But Maud heard neither the compliment, nor saw the expression of countenance which accompanied it. She merely made an impatient gesture to proceed. Nick gazed intently at the excited girl; and there was an instant when he seemed to waver in his own purpose; but the gesture, repeated, caused him to turn, and lead the way up the glen.

The progress of Nick now, necessarily, became more guarded and slower. He was soon obliged to quit the common path, and to incline to the left, more against the side of the cliff, for the purposes of concealment. From the time he had struck the simple bridge, until he took this precaution, his course had lain along what might have been termed the common highway, on which there was always the danger of meeting some messenger traveling to or from the valley.

But Nick was at no loss for paths. There were plenty of them; and the one he took soon brought him into that by which Captain Willoughby had descended to the lean-to. When the spot was reached where Joyce had halted, Nick paused; and, first listening intently, to catch the sound of noises, if any might happen to be in dangerous proximity, he addressed his companion:

"Young squaw bold," he said encouragingly; "now want heart of warrior."

"I can follow, Nick—having come so far, why distrust me now?"

"'Cause he here—down dere—woman love man; man love woman—dat right; but, no show it, when scalp in danger."

"Perhaps I do not understand you, Tuscarora—but, my trust is in God; He is a support that can uphold any weakness."

"Good!—stay here—Nick come back in minute."

Nick now descended to the passage between the rocks and the lean-to, in order to make certain that the major still remained in his prison before he incurred any unnecessary risk with Maud. Of this fact he was soon assured; after which he took the precaution to conceal the pool of blood, by covering it with earth and stones. Making his other observations with care, and placing the saw and chisel, with the other tools that had fallen from the captain's hand when he received his death-wound, in a position to be handy, he ascended the path and rejoined Maud. No word passed between our heroine and her guide. The latter motioned her to follow; then he led the way down to the cabin. Soon both had entered the narrow passage; and Maud, in obedience to a sign from her companion, seated herself on the precise spot where her father had been found, and where the knife had passed into his heart. To all this, however, Nick manifested the utmost indifference. Everything like ferocity had left his face; to use his own figurative language, his sores smarted no longer; and the expression of his eye was friendly and gentle. Still, it showed no signs of compunction.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Her pallid face displayed
Something, methought, surpassing mortal beauty.
She presently turned round, and fixed her large, wild eyes,
Brimming with tears, upon me, fetched a sigh,
As from a riven heart, and cried, 'He's dead!'"
—HILLHOUSE.

MAUD had been so earnest and so much excited, that she scarcely reflected on the singularity and novelty of her situation until she was seated, as described at the close of the last chapter. Then, indeed, she began to think that she had embarked in an undertaking of questionable prudence, and to wonder in what manner she was to be useful. Still her heart did not fail her, or her hopes altogether sink. She saw that Nick was grave and occupied, like a man who intended to effect his purpose at every hazard; and that purpose she firmly believed was the liberation of Robert Willoughby.

As for Nick, the instant his companion was seated, and he had got a position to his mind, he set about his business with great assiduity. It has been said that the lean-to, like the cabin, was built of logs; a fact that constituted the security of the prisoner. The logs of the lean-to, however, were much smaller than those of the body of the house, and both were of the common white pine of the country, a wood of durable qualities, used as it was here, but which yielded easily to edged tools. Nick had a small saw, a large chisel, and his knife. With the chisel he cautiously commenced opening a hole of communication with the interior, by removing a little of the mortar that filled the interstices between the logs. This occupied but a moment. When effected, Nick applied an eye to the hole, and took a look within. He muttered the word "good," then withdrew his own eye, and, by a sign, invited Maud to apply one of hers. This our heroine did, and saw Robert Willoughby reading within a few feet of her, with a calmness of air that at once announced his utter ignorance of the dire event that had so lately occurred, almost within reach of his arm.

"Squaw speak," whispered Nick;

"voice sweet as wren—go to major's ear like song of bird. Squaw speak music to young warrior."

Maud drew back, her heart beat violently, her breathing became difficult, and the blood rushed to her temples. But an earnest motion from Nick reminded her this was no time for hesitation, and she applied her mouth to the hole.

"Robert—dear Robert," she said in a loud whisper, "we are here—have come to release you."

Maud's impatience could wait no longer; but her eye immediately succeeded her mouth. That she was heard was evident from the circumstance that the book fell from the major's hand, in a way to show how completely he was taken by surprise. "He knows even my whispers," thought Maud, her heart beating still more violently, as she observed the young soldier gazing around him, with a bewildered air, like one who fancied he had heard the whisperings of some ministering angel. By this time Nick had removed a large piece of the mortar; and he too was looking into the buttery. By way of bringing matters to an understanding, the Indian thrust the chisel through the opening, and moving it, he soon attracted Willoughby's attention. The latter instantly advanced, and applied his own eye to the wide crack, catching a view of the swarthy face of Nick.

Willoughby knew that the presence of this Indian at such a place, and under such circumstances, indicated the necessity of caution. He did not speak, therefore; but first making a significant gesture toward the door of his narrow prison, thus intimating the close proximity of sentinels, he demanded the object of this visit, in a whisper.

"Come to set major free," answered Nick.

"Can I trust you, Tuscarora? Sometimes you seem a friend, sometimes an enemy. I know that you appear to be on good terms with my captors."

"Dat good—Injin know how to look two way—warrior must, if great warrior."

"I wish I had some proof, Nick, that you are dealing with me in good faith."

"Call dat proof, den!" growled the savage, seizing Maud's little hand, and passing it through the opening, before the startled girl was fully aware of what he meant to do.

Willoughby knew the hand at a glance. He would have recognized it in that forest solitude by its symmetry and whiteness, its delicacy and fullness; but one of the taper fingers wore a ring that, of late, Maud had much used; being a diamond hoop that she had learned was a favorite ornament of her real mother's. It was not surprising, therefore, that he seized the pledge that was thus strangely held forth and had covered it with kisses before Maud had presence of mind sufficient or strength to reclaim it. This she would not do, however, at such a moment, without returning all the proofs of ardent affection that were lavished on her own hand, by giving a gentle pressure to the one in which it was clasped.

"This is so strange, Maud!—so every way extraordinary, that I know not what to think," the young man whispered, soon as he could get a glimpse of the face of the sweet girl. "Why are you here, beloved, and in such company?"

"You will trust me, Bob. Nick comes as your friend. Aid him all you can, now, and be silent. When free, then will be the time to learn all."

A sign of assent succeeded, and the major withdrew a step in order to ascertain the course Nick meant to pursue. By this time the Indian was at work with his knife, and he soon passed the chisel in to the prisoner, who seized it, and commenced cutting into the logs at a point opposite to that where the Tuscarora was whittling away the wood. The object was to introduce the saw, and it required some labor to effect such a purpose. By dint of application, however, and by cutting the log above as well as that below, sufficient space was obtained in the course of a few minutes. Nick then passed the saw in through the opening, it exceeding his skill to use such a tool with readiness.

By this time Willoughby was engaged

with the earnestness and zeal of the captive who catches a glimpse of liberty. Notwithstanding, he proceeded intelligently and with caution. The blanket given him by his captors as a pallet was hanging from a nail, and he took the precaution to draw this nail, and to place it above the spot selected for the cut, that he might suspend the blanket so as to conceal what he was at in the event of a visit from without. When all was ready and the blanket was properly placed, he began to make long heavy strokes with the tool, in a way to deaden the sound. This was a delicate operation; but the work being done behind the blanket had some effect in lessening the noise. As the work proceeded Willoughby's hopes increased; and he was soon delighted to hear from Nick that it was time to insert the saw in another place. Success is apt to induce carelessness; and as the task proceeded, Willoughby's arm worked with greater rapidity, until a noise at the door gave the startling information that he was about to be visited. There was just time to finish the last cut, and to let the blanket fall, before the door opened. The sawdust and chips had all been carefully removed as the work proceeded, and of these none were left to betray the secret.

There might have been a quarter of a minute between the moment when Willoughby seated himself, with his book in his hand, and that in which the door opened. Short as was this interval, it sufficed for Nick to remove the piece of log last cut, and to take away the handle of the saw; the latter change permitting the blanket to hang so close against the logs as completely to conceal the hole. The sentinel who appeared was an Indian in externals, but a dull, white countryman in fact and character.

"I thought I heard the sound of a saw, major," he said, listlessly; "yet everything looks quiet, and in its place here!"

"Where should I get such a tool?" Willoughby coolly replied; "and what is there here to saw?"

"'Twas as nat'ral, too, as the carpenter himself could make it, in sound!"

"Possibly the mill has been set in motion by some of your idlers, and you have heard the large saw, which, at a distance, may sound like a smaller one near by."

The man looked incredulously at his prisoner for a moment; then he drew to the door, with the air of one who was determined to assure himself of the truth, calling aloud, as he did so, to one of his companions to join him. Willoughby knew that no time was to be lost. In half a minute, he had passed the hole, dropped the blanket before it, had circled the slender waist of Maud with one arm, and was shoving aside the bushes with the other, as he followed Nick from the straitened passage between the lean-to and the rock. The major seemed more bent on bearing Maud from the spot than on saving himself. Her feet scarce touched the ground as he ascended to the place where Joyce had halted. Here Nick stood an instant, with a finger raised in intense listening. His practiced ears caught the sound of voices in the lean-to, then scarce fifty feet distant. Men called to each other by name, and then a voice directly beneath them proclaimed that a head was already thrust through the hole.

"Here is your saw, and here is its workmanship?" exclaimed this voice.

"And here is blood, too," said another. "See! the ground has been a pool beneath those stones."

Maud shuddered as if the soul were leaving its earthly tenement, and Willoughby signed impatiently for Nick to proceed. But the savage, for a brief instant, seemed bewildered. The danger below, however, increased, and evidently drew so near that he turned and glided up the ascent. Presently the fugitives reached the descending path that diverged from the larger one they were on, and by which Nick and Maud had so recently come diagonally up this cliff. Nick leaped into it, and then the intervening bushes concealed their persons from any who might continue on the upward course. There was an open space, however, a little lower down; and the quick-witted savage came to a stand under a close cover, believing flight to be

useless should their pursuers actually follow on their heels.

The halt had not been made half a dozen seconds when the voices of the party ascending in chase were heard above the fugitives. Willoughby felt an impulse to dash down the path bearing Maud in his arms, but Nick interposed his own body to so rash a movement. There was not time for a discussion, and the sounds of voices, speaking English too distinctly to pass for any but those of men of English birth, or English origin, were heard disputing about the course to be taken at the point of junction between the two paths.

"Go by the lower," called out one from the rear; "he will run down the stream and make for the settlements on the Hudson. Once before he has done this, as I know from Strides himself."

"D—n Strides!" answered another, more in front. "He is a sniveling scoundrel, who loves liberty as a hog loves corn, for the sake of a good living. I say go the upper, which will carry him on the heights and bring him out near his father's garrison."

"Here are marks of feet on the upper," observed a third, "though they seem to be coming down instead of going up the hill."

"It is the trail of the fellows who have helped him to escape. Push up the hill, and we shall have them all in ten minutes. Push up—push up."

This decided the matter. It appeared to Willoughby that at least a dozen men ran up the path, above his head, eager in the pursuit, and anticipating success. Nick waited no longer, but glided down the cliff, and was soon in the broad path which led along the margin of the stream, and was the ordinary thoroughfare in going to or from the Knoll. Here the fugitives, as on the advance, were exposed to the danger of accidental meetings; but fortunately no one was met or seen, and the bridge was passed in safety. Turning short to the north, Nick plunged into the woods again, following the cow-path by which he had so recently descended to the glen. No pause was made even here. Willoughby had an arm around Maud, and bore her forward with a rapidity to which her own strength was altogether unequal. In less than ten minutes from the time the prisoner had escaped, the fugitives reached the level rock of the waterfall, or that of the plain of the dam. As it was reasonably certain that none of the invaders had passed to that side of the valley, haste was no longer necessary, and Maud was permitted to pause for breath.

The halt was short, however, our heroine, herself, now feeling as if the major could not be secure until he was fairly within the palisades. In vain did Willoughby try to pacify her fears and to assure her of his comparative safety; Maud's nerves were excited, and then she had the dreadful tidings, which still remained to be told, pressing upon her spirits, and quickening all her natural impulses and sentiments.

Nick soon made the signal to proceed, and then the three began to circle the flats, as mentioned in the advance of Maud and her companion. When they reached a favorable spot, the Indian once more directed a halt, intimating his own intention to move to the margin of the woods, in order to reconnoiter. Both his companions heard this announcement with satisfaction, for Willoughby was eager to say to Maud directly that which he had so plainly indicated by means of the box, and to extort from her a confession that she was not offended; while Maud herself felt the necessity of letting the major know the melancholy circumstance that yet remained to be told. With these widely distinct feelings uppermost our two lovers saw Nick quit them, each impatient, restless, and uneasy.

Willoughby had found a seat for Maud on a log, and he placed himself at her side, and took her hand, pressing it silently to his heart.

"Nick has, then, been a true man, dearest Maud," he said, "notwithstanding all my doubt sand misgivings of him."

"Yes; he gave me to understand you would hardly trust him, and that was the reason I was induced to accompany him.

We both thought, Bob, you would confide in me!"

"Bless you, bless you, beloved Maud; but have you seen Mike; has he had any interview with you; in a word, did he deliver you my box?"

Maud's feelings had been so much excited that the declaration of Willoughby's love, precious as it was to her heart, failed to produce the outward signs that are usually exhibited by the delicate and sensitive of her sex when they listen to the insinuating language for the first time. Her thoughts were engrossed with her dreadful secret, and with the best and least shocking means of breaking it to the major. The tint on her cheek, therefore, scarce deepened, as this question was put to her, while her eye, full of earnest tenderness, still remained riveted on the face of her companion.

"I have seen Mike, dear Bob," she answered, with a steadiness that had its rise in her singleness of purpose—"and he has shown me—given me the box."

"But have you understood me, Maud? You will remember that box contained the great secret of my life."

"This I well remember—yes, the box contains the great secret of your life."

"But—you cannot have understood me, Maud—else would you not look so unconcerned—so vacantly—I am not understood, and am miserable!"

"No—no — no —" interrupted Maud, hurriedly—"I understand all you have wished to say, and you have no cause to be—" Maud's voice became choked, for she recollected the force of the blow she had in reserve.

"This is so strange!—altogether so unlike your usual manner, Maud, that there must be some mistake. The box contained nothing but your own hair, dearest."

"Yes; nothing else. It was my hair; I knew it the instant I saw it."

"And did it tell you no secret! Why was Beulah's hair not with it? Why did I cherish your hair, Maud, and yours alone? You have not understood me!"

"I have, dear, dear Bob! You love me—you wished to say we are not brother and sister, in truth; that we have an affection that is far stronger—one that will bind us together for life. Do not look so wretched, Bob; I understand everything you wish to say."

"This is so very extraordinary! So unlike yourself, Maud, I know not what to make of it! I sent you that box, beloved one, to say that you had my whole heart; that I thought of you day and night; that you were the great object of my existence, and that, while misery would be certain without you, felicity would be just as certain with you; in a word, that I love you, Maud, and can never love another."

"Yes, so I understood you, Bob." Maud, spite of her concentration of feeling on the dreadful secret, could not refrain from blushing. "It was too plain to be mistaken."

"And how was my declaration received? Tell me at once, dear girl, with your usual truth of character and frankness—can you, will you love me in return?"

This was a home question, and, on another occasion, it might have produced a scene of embarrassment and hesitation. But Maud was delighted with the idea that it was in her power to break the violence of the blow she was about to inflict, by setting Robert Willoughby's mind at ease on this great point.

"I do love you, Bob," she said, with fervent affection beaming in every lineament of her angel face—"have loved you for years—how could it be otherwise? I have scarce seen any other to love; and how see you, and refrain?"

"Blessed, blessed Maud—but this is so strange—I fear you do not understand me—I am not speaking of such affection as Beulah bears me, as brother and sister feel; I speak of the love that my mother bore my father—of the love of man and wife—"

A groan from Maud stopped the vehement young man, who received his companion in his arms, as she bowed her head on his bosom, half fainting.

"Is this resentment, dearest, or is it consent?" he asked, bewildered by all that passed.

"This was enough. Nick passed out of the forest on a swift walk—but for the female it would have been his customary loping trot—followed by Willoughby, his arm again circ'ling the waist of Maud."—*Wyandotte.*

"Oh! Bob—Father—father—father!"

"My father!—what of him, Maud? Why has the allusion to him brought you to this state?"

"They have killed him, dearest, dearest Bob; and you must now be father, husband, brother, son, all in one. We have no one left but you!"

A long pause succeeded. The shock was terrible to Robert Willoughby, but he bore up against it like a man. Maud's incoherent and unnatural manner was now explained, and while unutterable tenderness of manner—a tenderness that was increased by what had just passed—was exhibited by each to the other, no more was said of love. A common grief appeared to bind their hearts closer together, but it was unnecessary to dwell on their mutual affection in words. Robert Willoughby's sorrow mingled with that of Maud, and, as he folded her to his heart, their faces were literally bathed in each other's tears.

It was some time before Willoughby could ask, or Maud give, an explanation. Then the latter briefly recounted all she knew, her companion listening with the closest attention. The son thought the occurrence as extraordinary as it was afflicting, but there was not leisure for inquiry.

It was, perhaps, fortunate for our lovers that Nick's employment kept him away. For nearly ten minutes longer did he continue absent; then he returned, slowly, thoughtful, and possibly a little disturbed. At the sound of his footsteps, Willoughby released Maud from his arms, and both assumed an air of as much tranquillity as the state of their feelings would allow.

"Better march"—said Nick, in his sententious manner—"Mohawk very mad."

"Do you see the signs of this?" asked the major, scarce knowing what he said.

"Always make Injin mad; lose scalp. Prisoner run away, carry scalp with him."

"I rather think, Nick, you do my captors injustice; so far from desiring anything so cruel, they treated me well enough, considering the circumstances, and that we are in the woods."

"Yes; spare scalp, 'cause t'ink rope ready. Nebber trust Mohawk—all bad Injin."

To own the truth, one of the great failings of the savages of the American forests was to think of the neighboring tribes as the Englishman is known to think of the Frenchman; and vice versa; as the German thinks of both, and all think of the Yankee. In a word, his own tribe contains everything that is excellent with the Pawnee, the Osage, and Pottawattomie, as Paris contains all that is perfect in the eye of the *bourgeois*, London in those of the cockney, and this virtuous republic in those of its own enlightened citizens; while the hostile communities are remorselessly given up to the tender solicitude of those beings which lead nations, as well as individuals, into the sinks of perdition. Thus Nick, liberalized as his mind had comparatively become by intercourse with the whites, still retained enough of the impressions of childhood to put the worst construction on the acts of all his competitors, and the best on his own. In this spirit, then, he warned his companions against placing any reliance on the mercy of the Mohawks.

Major Willoughby, however, had now sufficient inducements to move without reference to the hostile intentions of his late captors. That his escape would excite a malignant desire for vengeance, he could easily believe; but his mother, his revered heart-broken mother, and the patient, afflicted Beulah, were constantly before him, and gladly did he press on, Maud leaning on his arm the instant Nick led the way. To say that the lovely, confiding being who clung to his side, as the vine inclines to the tree, was forgotten, or that he did not retain a vivid recollection of all that she had so ingenuously avowed in his favor, would not be rigidly accurate, though the hopes thus created shone in the distance, under the present causes of grief, as the sun's rays illumine the depths of the heavens while his immediate face is entirely hidden by an eclipse.

"Did you see any signs of a movement against the house, Nick?" demanded the major, when the three had

been busily making their way, for several minutes, round the margin of the forest.

The Tuscarora turned, nodded his head, and glanced at Maud.

"Speak frankly, Wyandotte—"

"Good!" interrupted the Indian with emphasis, assuming a dignity of manner the major had never before witnessed. "Wyandotte come—Nick gone away altogether. Nebber see Sassy Nick, ag'in, at dam."

"I am glad to hear this, Tuscarora, and as Maud says, you may speak plainly."

"T'ink, den, best be ready. Mohawk feel worse den if he lose ten, t'ree, six scalp. Injin know Injin feelin'. Paleface can't stop redskin, when blood get up."

"Press on, then, Wyandotte, for the sake of God—let me, at least, die in defense of my beloved mother!"

"Moder; good! Doctor Tuscarora when death grin in face! She my moder too!"

This was said energetically, and in a manner to assure his listeners that they had a firm ally in this warlike savage. Little did either dream, at that instant, that this same wayward being—the creature of passion, and the fierce avenger of all his own fancied griefs, was the cause of the dreadful blow that had so recently fallen on them.

The sun still wanted an hour of setting, when Nick brought his companions to the fallen tree, by which they were again to cross the rivulet. Here he paused, pointing to the roofs of the Hut, which were then just visible through the trees; as much as to say that his duty, as a guide, was done.

"Thank you, Wyandotte," said Willoughby; "if it be the will of God to carry us safely through the crisis, you shall be well rewarded for this service."

"Wyandotte chief want no dollar. Been Injin runner—now be Injin warrior. Major follow—squaw follow—Mohawk in hurry."

This was enough. Nick passed out of the forest on a swift walk—but for the female, it would have been his customary loping trot—followed by Willoughby; his arm, again encircling the waist of Maud, whom he bore along, scarce permitting her light form to touch the earth. At this instant four or five conchs sounded in the direction of the mills and along the western margin of the meadows. Blast seemed to echo blast; then the infernal yell, known as the war-whoop, was heard all along the opposite face of the buildings. Judging from the sounds, the meadows were alive with assailants, pressing on for the palisades.

At this appalling moment, Joyce appeared on the ridge of the roof, shouting, in a voice that might have been heard to the furthest point in the valley—

"Stand to your arms, my men," he cried; "here the scoundrels come; hold your fire until they attempt to cross the stockade."

To own the truth, there was a little bravado in this, mingled with the stern courage that habit and nature had both contributed to lend the sergeant. The veteran knew the feebleness of his garrison, and fancied that warlike cries, from himself, might counterbalance the yells that were now rising from all the fields in front of the house.

As for Nick and the major, they pressed forward, too earnest and excited to speak. The former measured the distance by his ear, and thought there was still time to gain a cover, if no moment was lost. To reach the foot of the cliff, took just a minute; to ascend to the hole in the palisade, half as much time; and to pass it, a quarter. Maud was dragged ahead, as much as she ran; and the period when the three were passing swiftly round to the gate was pregnant with imminent risk. They were seen, and fifty rifles were discharged, as it might be, at a command. The bullets pattered against the logs of the Hut, and against the palisades, but no one was hurt. The voice of Willoughby opened the gate, and the next instant the three were within the shelter of the court.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"They have not perished—no!
Kind words, remembered voices, once so sweet,
Smiles, radiant long ago,
And features, the great soul's apparent seat;

"All shall come back, each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again;
Alone shall evil die,
And sorrow dwell a prisoner in thy reign.

"And then shall I behold
Him, by whose kind paternal side I sprung,
And her, who still and cold,
Fills the next grave—the beautiful and young."
—BRYANT'S "PAST."

THE scene that followed passed like a hurricane sweeping over the valley. Joyce had remained on the ridge of the roof, animating his little garrison, and endeavoring to intimidate his enemies, to the last moment. The volley of bullets had reached the palisades and the buildings, and he was still unharmed. But the sound of the major's voice below, and the cry that Miss Maud and Nick were at the gate, produced a sudden change in all his dispositions for the defense. The sergeant ran below himself to report and receive his orders from the new commander, while all the negroes, females as well as males, rushed down into the court, to meet their young master and mistress.

It is not easy to describe the minute that succeeded after Willoughby and Maud were surrounded by the blacks. The delight of these untutored beings was in proportion to their recent sorrow. The death of their master, and the captivity of Master Bob and Miss Maud, had appeared to them like a general downfall of the family of Willoughby; but here was a revival of its hopes, that came as unexpectedly as its previous calamities. Amid the clamor, cries, tears, lamentations, and bursts of uncontrollable delight, Joyce could scarce find a moment in which to discharge his duty.

"I see how it is, sergeant," exclaimed Willoughby; "the assault is now making, and you desire orders."

"There is not an instant to lose, Major Willoughby; the enemy are at the palisades already, and there is no one at his station but Jamie and young Blodget."

"To your posts, men—to your posts, everybody. The house shall be made good at all hazards. For God's sake, Joyce, give me arms. I feel that my father's wrongs are to be revenged."

"Robert—dear, dear Robert," said Maud, throwing her arms on his shoulders, "this is no moment for such bitter feelings. Defend us, as I know you will, but defend us like a Christian."

One kiss was all that the time allowed, and Maud rushed into the house to seek her mother and Beulah, feeling as if the tidings of Bob's return might prove some little alleviation to the dreadful blow under which they must be suffering.

As for Willoughby, he had no time for pious efforts at consolation. The Hut was to be made good against a host of enemies; and the cracking of rifles from the staging and the fields announced that the conflict had begun in earnest. Joyce handed him a rifle, and together they ascended rapidly to the roofs. Here they found Jamie Allen and Blodget, loading and firing as fast as they could, and were soon joined by all the negroes. Seven men were now collected on the staging, and placing three in front, and two on each wing, the major's dispositions were made; moving himself incessantly to whatever point circumstances called. Mike, who knew little of the use of firearms, was stationed at the gate, as porter and warder.

It was so unusual a thing for savages to attack by daylight, unless they could resort to surprise, that the assailants were themselves a little confused. The assault was made under a sudden feeling of resentment at the escape of the prisoner, and contrary to the wishes of the principal white men in the party, though the latter were dragged in the train of events, and had to seem to countenance that of which they really disapproved. These sudden outbreakings were sufficiently common in Indian warfare, and often produced memorable disasters. On the present occasion, however, the most that could occur was a repulse, and to this the leaders, demagogues who owed their authority to the excesses

necessities of the times, were fain to submit, should it happen.

The onset had been fierce and too unguarded. The moment the volley was fired at the major, the assailants broke cover, and the fields were alive with men. This was the instant when the defense was left to Allen and Blodget, else might the exposure have cost the enemy dear. As it was, the last brought down one of the boldest of the Indians, while the mason fired with good will, though with less visible effect. The yell that followed this demonstration of the apparent force of the garrison, was a wild mixture of anger and exultation, and the rush at the palisades was general and swift. As Willoughby posted his re-enforcement, the stockade was alive with men, some ascending, some firing from its summit, some aiding others to climb, and one falling within the inclosure, a second victim to Blodget's unerring aim.

The volley that now came from the roofs staggered the savages, most of whom fell outward, and sought cover in their usual quick and dexterous manner. Three or four, however, thought it safer to fall within the palisades, seeking safety immediately under the sides of the buildings. The view of these men, who were perfectly safe from the fire of the garrison so long as the latter made no sortie, gave an idea to those without, and produced, what had hitherto been wanting, something like order and concert in the attack. The firing now became desultory and watchful on both sides, the attacking party keeping themselves covered by the trees and fences as well as they could, while the garrison only peered above the ridge of the roof, as occasion required.

The instant the outbreak occurred all the *ci-devant* dependents of Captain Willoughby, who had deserted, abandoned their various occupations in the woods and fields, collecting in and around the cabins, in the midst of their wives and children. Joel alone was not to be seen. He had sought his friends among the leaders of the party, behind a stack of hay, at a respectful distance from the house, and to which there was a safe approach by means of the rivulet and its fringe of bushes. The little council that was held at this spot took place just as the half-dozen assailants who had fallen within the palisades were seen clustering along under the walls of the buildings.

"Natur' gives you a hint how to conduct," observed Joel, pointing out this circumstance to his principal companions, as they all lay peering over the upper portions of the stack, at the Hut. "You see them men under the eaves—they're a plaguy sight safer up there than we be down here; and, if 'tweren't for the look of the thing, I wish I was with 'em. That house will never be taken without a desperate sight of fightin'; for the captain is an old warrior, and seems to like to snuff gunpowder"—the reader will understand none knew of the veteran's death but those in the house—"and won't be for givin' up while he has a charge left. If I had twenty men—no, thirty would be better, where these fellows be, I think the place could be carried in a few minutes, and then liberty would gets its rights, and your monarchy-men would be put down as they all deserve."

"What do then?" demanded the leading Mohawk, in his abrupt, guttural English. "No shoot—can't kill log."

"No, chief, that's reasonable, an' ongainsayable, too; but only one half the inner gate is hung, and I've contrived matters so, on purpose, that the props of the half that isn't on the hinges can be undone, all the same as on-latching the door. If I only had the right man here now, the business should be done, and that speedily."

"Go 'self," answered the Mohawk, not without an expression of distrust and contempt.

"Every man to his callin', chief. My trade is peace, and politics, and liberty, while yours is war. Hows'ever, I can put you, and them that likes fightin', on the trail, and then we'll see how matters can be done. Mortality! How them desperate devils on the roof do keep blazin' away! It wouldn't surprise me if they shot somebody, or got hurt themselves!"

Such were the deliberations of Joel

Strides on a battle. The Indian leaders, however, gave some of their ordinary signals, to bring their "young men" more under command, and, sending messengers with orders in different directions, they left the haystack, compelling Joel to accompany them.

The results of these movements were soon apparent. The most daring of the Mohawks made their way into the rivulet, north of the buildings, and were soon at the foot of the cliffs. A little reconnoitering told them that the hole which Joel had pointed out had not been closed since the entrance of Willoughby and his companions. Led by their chief, the warriors stole up the ascent, and began to crawl through the same inlet which had served as an outlet to so many deserters, the previous night, accompanied by their wives and children.

The Indians in front had been ordered to occupy the attention of the garrison, while this movement was in the course of execution. At a signal they raised a yell, unmasked them, fired one volley, and seemed to make another rush at the works. This was the instant chosen for the passage of the hole, and the seven leading savages effected their entrance within the stockade with safety. The eighth man was shot by Blodget, in the hole itself. The body was instantly withdrawn by the legs, and all in the rear fell back under the cover of the cliff.

Willoughby now understood the character of the assault. Stationing Joyce with a party to command the hole, he went himself into the libraray, accompanied by Jamie and Blodget, using a necessary degree of caution. Fortunately the windows were raised, and a sudden volley routed all the Indians who had taken shelter beneath the rocks. These men, however, fled no further than the rivulet, where they rallied under cover of the bushes, keeping up a dropping fire at the windows. For several minutes the combat was confined to this spot; Willoughby, by often shifting from window to window along the rear of the house, getting several volleys that told, at the men under the cover.

As yet, all the loss had been on the side of the assailants, though several of the garrison, including both Willoughby and Joyce, had divers exceedingly narrow escapes. Quite a dozen of the assailants had suffered, though only four were killed outright. By this time the assault had lasted an hour, and the shades of evening were closing around the place. Daniel, the miller, had been sent by Joel to spring the mine they had prepared together, but, making the mistake usual with the uninitiated, he had hung back, to let others pass the hole first, and was consequently carried down in the crowd, within the cover of the bushes of the rivulet.

Willoughby had a short consultation with Joyce, and then he set seriously about the preparations necessary for a night defense. By a little management, and some personal risk, the bullet-proof shutters in the north wing of the Hut were all closed, rendering the rear of the buildings virtually impregnable. When this was done, and the gates of the area were surely shut, the place was like a ship in a gale, under short canvas and hove-to. The enemy within the palisades were powerless, to all appearance, the walls of stone preventing anything like an application of fire. Of the last, however, there was a little danger on the roof, the Indians frequently using arrows for this purpose, and water was placed on the staging in readiness to be used on occasion.

All these preparations occupied some time, and it was quite dark ere they were completed. Then Willoughby had a moment for reflection; the firing having entirely ceased, and nothing further remaining to do.

"We are safe for the present, Joyce," the major observed, as he and the sergeant stood together on the staging, after having consulted on the present aspect of things; "and I have a solemn duty yet to perform—my dear mother—and the body of my father—"

"Yes, sir; I would not speak of either, so long as it was your honor's pleasure to remain silent on the subject. Madam

Willoughby is sorely cut down, as you may imagine, sir; and, as for my gallant old commander, he died in his harness, as a soldier should."

"Where have you taken the body? has my mother seen it?"

"Lord bless you, sir, Madam Willoughby had his honor carried into her own room, and there she and Miss Beulah"—so all of the Hut still called the wife of Evert Beekman—"she and Miss Beulah kneel, and pray, and weep, as you know, sir, ladies will, whenever anything severe comes over their feelings—God bless them both, we all say and think, ay, and pray, too, in our turns, sir."

"Very well, Joyce. Even a soldier may drop a tear over the dead body of his own father. God only knows what this night will bring forth, and I may never have a moment as favorable as this, for discharging so solemn a duty."

"Yes, your honor"—Joyce fancied that the major had succeeded to this appellation by the decease of the captain—"yes, your honor, the commandments, that the Rev. Mr. Woods used to read to us of a Sunday, tell us all about that; and it is quite as much the duty of a Christian to mind the commandments, I do suppose, as it is for a soldier to obey orders. God bless you, sir, and carry you safe through the affair. I had a touch of it with Miss Maud, myself, and know what it is. It's bad enough to lose an old commander in so sudden a way like, without having to feel what has happened in company with so sweet ladies as these we have in the house. As for these blackguards down inside the works, let them give you no uneasiness; it will be light work for us to keep them busy, compared to what your honor has to do."

It would seem by the saddened manner in which Willoughby moved away, that he was of the same way of thinking as the sergeant, on this melancholy subject. The moment, however, was favorable for the object, and delay could not be afforded. Then Willoughby's disposition was to console his mother even while he wept with her over the dead body of him they had lost.

Notwithstanding the wild uproar that had so prevailed, not only without, but within the place, the portion of the house that was occupied by the widowed matron and her daughters was silent as the grave. All the domestics were either on the staging, or at the loops, leaving the kitchens and offices deserted. The major first entered a little anti-chamber, that opened between a store-room and the apartment usually occupied by his mother, this being the ordinary means of approach to her room. Here he paused, and listened quite a minute, in the hope of catching some sound from within that might prepare him for the scene he was to meet. Not a whisper, a moan, or a sob could be heard; and he ventured to tap lightly at the door. This was unheeded; waiting another minute, as much in dread as in respect, he raised the latch with some such awe as one would enter into a tomb of some beloved one. A single lamp let him into the secrets of this solemn place.

In the center of the room, lay stretched on a large table, the manly form of the author of his being. The face was uppermost, and the limbs had been laid, in decent order, as is usual with the dead that have been cared for. No change had been made in the dress, however, the captain lying in the hunting-shirt in which he had sallied forth; the crimson tint which disfigured one breast having been sedulously concealed by the attention of Great Smash. The passage from life to eternity had been so sudden as to leave the usual benignant expression on the countenance of the corpse; the paleness which had succeeded the fresh ruddy tint of nature alone denoting that the sleep was not a sweet repose, but that of death.

The body of his father was the first object that met the gaze of the major. He advanced, leaned forward, kissed the marble-like forehead with reverence, and groaned in the effort to suppress an unmanly outbreaking of sorrow. Then he turned to seek the other well-beloved faces. There sat Beulah, in a corner of the room, as if to seek shelter for her infant, folding that infant to her heart, keeping her look riveted, in anguish, on

the inanimate form that she had ever loved beyond a daughter's love. Even the presence of her brother scarce drew a glance away from the sad spectacle; though, when it at length did, the youthful matron bowed her face down to that of her child, and wept convulsively. She was nearest to the major, who moved to her side, and kissed the back of her neck, with kind affection. The meaning was understood; and Beulah, while unable to look up, extended a hand to meet the fraternal pressure it received.

Maud was near, kneeling at the side of the bed. Her whole attitude denoted the abstraction of a mind absorbed in worship and solicitation. Though Willoughby's heart yearned to raise her in his arms, to console her, and bid her lean on himself, in future, for her earthly support, he too much respected her present occupation to break in upon it with any irreverent zeal of his own. His eye turned from this loved object, therefore, and hurriedly looked for his mother.

The form of Mrs. Willoughby had escaped the first glances of her son, in consequence of the position in which she had placed herself. The stricken wife was in a corner of the room, her person partly concealed by the drapery of a window-curtain; though this was evidently more the effect of accident than of design. Willoughby started, as he caught the first glance of his beloved parent's face; and he felt a chill pass over his whole frame. There she sat upright, motionless, tearless, without any of the alleviating weaknesses of a less withering grief, her mild countenance exposed to the light of the lamp; and her eyes riveted on the face of the dead. In this posture had she remained for hours; no tender cares on the part of her daughters; no attentions from her domestics; no outbreaking of her own sorrows, producing any change. Even the clamor of the assault had passed by her like the idle wind.

"My mother—my poor—dear—heart-broken mother!" burst from Willoughby, at this sight, and he stepped quickly forward, and knelt at her feet.

But Bob—the darling Bob—his mother's pride and joy, was unheeded. The heart which had so long beaten for others only; which never seemed to feel a wish or a pulsation, but in the service of the objects of its affection, was not sufficiently firm to withstand the blow that had lighted on it so suddenly. Enough of life remained, however, to support the frame for awhile; and the will still exercised its power over the mere animal functions. Her son shut out the view of the body, and she motioned him aside with an impatience of manner he had never before witnessed from the same quarter. Inexpressibly shocked, the major took her hands, by gentle compulsion, covering them with kisses, and literally bathing them in tears.

"Oh, mother—dearest mother!" he cried, "will you not—do you not know me—Robert—Bob—your much-indulged, grateful, affectionate son? If father has gone into the immediate presence of the God he revered and served, I am still left to be a support to your declining years. Lean on me, mother, next to your Father in heaven."

"Will he ever get up, Robert?" whispered the widowed mother. "You speak too loud, and may rouse him before his time. He promised me to bring you back; and he ever kept his promises. He had a long march and is weary. See, how sweetly he sleeps!"

Robert Willoughby bowed his head to his mother's knees and groaned aloud. When he raised his face again he saw the arms of Maud elevated toward Heaven, as if she would pluck down that consolation for her mother that her spirit was so fervently asking of the Almighty. Then he gazed into the face of his mother again; hoping to catch a gleam of some expression and recognition that denoted more of reason. It was in vain; the usual placidity, the usual mild affection were there; but both were blended with the unnatural halo of a mind excited to disease, if not to madness. A slight exclamation, which sounded like alarm, came from Beulah; and turning toward his sister, Willoughby saw that she was clasping Evert still closer to her

bosom, with her eyes now bent on the door. Looking in the direction of the latter, he perceived that Nick had stealthily entered the room.

The unexpected appearance of Wyandotte might well alarm the youthful mother. He had applied his war-paint since entering the Hut; and this, though it indicated an intention to fight in defense of the house, left a picture of startling aspect. There was nothing hostile intended by his visit, however. Nick had come not only in amity, but in a kind concern to see after the females of the family who had ever stood high in his friendship, notwithstanding the tremendous blow he had struck against their happiness. But he had been accustomed to see those close distinctions drawn between individuals and colors; and, the other proprieties admitted, would not have hesitated about consoling the widow with the offer of his own hand. Major Willoughby, understanding, from the manner of the Indian, the object of his visit, suffered him to pursue his own course, in the hope it might rouse his mother to a better consciousness of objects around her.

Nick walked calmly up to the table, and gazed at the face of his victim with a coldness that proved he felt no compunction. Still he hesitated about touching the body, actually raising his hand, as if with that intent, and then withdrawing it, like one stung by conscience. Willoughby noted the act; and, for the first time, a shadowy suspicion glanced on his mind. Maud had told him all she knew of the manner of his father's death, and old distrusts began to revive, though so faintly as to produce no immediate results.

As for the Indian, the hesitating gesture excepted, the strictest scrutiny, or the keenest suspicion, could have detected no sign of feeling. The senseless form before him was not less moved than he appeared to be, so far as the human eye could penetrate. Wyandotte was unmoved. He believed that, in curing the sores on his own back in this particular manner, he had done what became a Tuscarora warrior and a chief. Let not the self-styled Christians of civilized society affect horror at this instance of savage justice, so long as they go the whole length of the law in their several communities, in avenging their own fancied wrongs, using the dagger of calumny instead of the scalping-knife, and rending and tearing their victims, by the agency of gold and power, like so many beasts of the field, in all forms and modes that legal vindictiveness will either justify or tolerate; often exceeding those broad limits, indeed, and seeking impunity behind perjuries and fraud.

Nick's examination of the body was neither hurried nor agitated. When it was over, he turned calmly to consider the daughters of the deceased.

"Why you cry—why you 'fear'd?" he said, approaching Beulah, and placing his swarthy hand on the head of her sleeping infant. "Good squaw—good pappoose. Wyandotte take care 'em in woods. Bye'em-by go to pale-face town and sleep quiet."

This was rudely said, but it was well meant. Beulah so received it; and she endeavored to smile her gratitude in the face of the very being from whom, more than from all of earth, she would have turned in horror, could her mental vision have reached the fearful secret that lay buried in his own bosom. The Indian understood her look; and making a gesture of encouragement, he moved to the side of the woman whom his own hand had made a widow.

The appearance of Wyandotte produced no change in the look or manner of the matron. The Indian took her hand, and spoke.

"Squaw berry good," he said with emphasis. "Why look so sorry—cap'in gone to happy huntin' ground of his people. All good dere—chief time come, must go."

The widow knew the voice, and by some secret association it recalled the scenes of the past, producing a momentary revival of her faculties.

"Nick, you are my friend," she said, earnestly. "Go, speak to him, and see if you can wake him up."

The Indian fairly started, as he heard this strange proposal. The weakness

lasted only for a moment, however, and he became as stoical, in appearance at least, as before.

"No," he said; "squaw quit cap'n, now. Warrior go on last path all alone—no want companion. She look at grave, now and den, and be happy."

"Happy!" echoed the widow, "what is that, Nick? what is happy, my son? It seems a dream—I must have known what it was; but I forget it all now. Oh! it was cruel, cruel, cruel, cruel, to stab a husband, and a father—wasn't it, Robert? What say you, Nick—shall I give you more medicine? You'll die, Indian, unless you take it—mind what a Christian woman tells you, and be obedient. Here, let me hold the cup—there; now you'll live!"

Nick recoiled an entire step, and gazed at the still beautiful victim of his ruthless revenge, in a manner no one had ever before noted in his mien. His mixed habits left him in ignorance of no shade of the fearful picture before his eyes, and he began better to comprehend the effects of the blow he had so hastily struck—a blow meditated for years, though given at length under a sudden and vehement impulse. The widowed mother, however, was past noting these changes.

"No—no—no—Nick," she added, hurriedly, scarce speaking above a whisper, "do not awake him! God will do that when he summons his blessed ones to the foot of his throne. Let us all lie down and sleep with him. Robert, do you lie there, at his side, my noble, noble boy; Beulah, place little Evert and yourself at the other side; Maud, your place is by the head; I will sleep at his feet; while Nick shall watch, and let us know when it will be time to rise and pray—"

The general and intense—almost spell-bound—attention with which all in the room listened to these gentle but touching wanderings of a mind so single and pure, was interrupted by yells so infernal, and shrieks so wild and fearful, that it seemed, in sooth, as if the last trump had sounded, and men were passing forth from their graves to judgment. Willoughby almost leaped out of the room, and Maud followed, to shut and bolt the door, when her waist was encircled by the arm of Nick, and she found herself borne forward toward the din.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"O, Time and Death! with certain pace,
Though still unequal, hurrying on,
O'erturning, in your awful race,
The cot, the palace, and the throne!"
—SANDS.

MAUD had little leisure for reflection. The yells and shrieks were followed by the cries of combatants, and the crack of the rifle. Nick hurried her along at a rate so rapid that she had not breath to question or remonstrate, until she found herself at the door of a small store-room, in which her mother was accustomed to keep articles of domestic economy that required but little space. Into this room Nick thrust her, and then she heard the key turned on her egress. For a single moment, Wyandotte stood hesitating whether he should endeavor to get Mrs. Willoughby and her other daughter into the same place of security; then, judging of the futility of the attempt, by the approach of the sounds within, among which he heard the full manly voice of Robert Willoughby, calling on the garrison to be firm, he raised an answering yell to those of the Mohawks, the war-whoop of his tribe, and plunged into the fray with the desperation of one who ran amuck, and with the delight of a demon.

In order to understand the cause of this sudden change, it will be necessary to return a little, in the order of time. While Willoughby was with his mother and sisters, Mike had charge of the gate. The rest of the garrison was either at the loops, or was stationed on the roofs. As the darkness increased, Joel mustered sufficient courage to crawl through the hole, and actually reached the gate. Without him, it was found impossible to spring his mine, and he had been prevailed on to risk this much on condition it should not be asked of him to do such violence to his feelings as to enter the court of a house in which he had seen so many happy days.

The arrangement by which this traitor intended to throw a family upon the tender mercies of the savages, was exceedingly simple. It will be remembered that only one leaf of the inner gate was hung, the other being put in its place, where it was sustained by a prop. This prop consisted of a single piece of timber, of which one end rested on the ground, and the other on the center of the gate; the last being effectually prevented from slipping by pins of wood, driven into the massive woodwork of the gate, above its end. The lower end of the prop rested against a fragment of rock that nature had placed at this particular spot. As the work had been set up in a hurry, it was found necessary to place wedges between the lower end of the prop and the rock, in order to force the leaf properly into its groove, without which it might have been canted to one side, and of course easily overturned by the exercise of sufficient force from without.

To all this arrangement Joel had been a party, and he knew, as a matter of course, its strong and its weak points. Seizing a favorable moment, he had loosened the wedges, leaving them in their places, however, but using the precaution to fasten a bit of small but strong cord to the most material one of the three, which cord he buried in the dirt and led half round a stick driven into the earth, quite near the wall, and thence through a hole made by one of the hinges, to the outer side of the leaf. The whole had been done with so much care as to escape the vigilance of casual observers, and expressly that the overseer might assist his friends in entering the place, after he himself had provided for his own safety by flight. The circumstance that no one trod on the side of the gateway where the unhung leaf stood, prevented the half-buried cord from being disturbed by any casual footstep.

As soon as Joel reached the wall of the Hut his first care was to ascertain if he were safe from missiles from the loops. Assured of this fact, he stole round to the gate, and had a consultation with the Mohawk chief on the subject of springing the mine. The cord was found in its place; and, hauling on it gently, Joel was soon certain that he had removed the wedge, and that force might speedily throw down the unhung leaf. Still he proceeded with caution. Applying the point of the lever to the bottom of the leaf, he hove it back sufficiently to be sure it would pass inside of its fellow; and then he announced to the grave warrior, who had watched the whole proceeding, that the time was come to lend his aid.

There were a dozen reckless whites in the cluster of savages collected at the gate, and enough of these were placed at handspikes to effect the intended dislodgment. The plan was this: while poles were set against the upper portion of the leaf, to force it within the line of the suspended part, handspikes and crowbars, of which a sufficiency had been provided by Joel's forethought, were to be applied between the hinge edge and the wall, to cast the whole over to the other side.

Unluckily, Mike had been left at the gate as the sentinel. A more unfortunate selection could not have been made; the true-hearted fellow having so much self-confidence and so little forethought as to believe the gates impregnable. He had lighted a pipe, and was smoking as tranquilly as he had ever done before, in his daily indulgences of this character, when the unhung leaf came tumbling in upon the side where he sat, nothing saving his head but the upper edge's lodging against the wall. At the same moment, a dozen Indians leaped through the opening, and sprang into the court, raising the yells already described. Mike followed, armed with his shillelah, for his musket was abandoned in the surprise, and he began to lay about him with an earnestness that in nowise lessened the clamor. This was the moment when Joyce, nobly sustained by Blodget and Jamie Allen, poured a volley into the court from the roofs, when the fray became general. To this point had the combat reached, when Willoughby rushed into the open air, followed, a few instants later, by Nick.

The scene that succeeded is not easily described. It was a *melée* in the dark, illu-

minated at instants by the flashes of guns, and rendered horrible by shrieks, curses, groans, and whoops. Mike actually cleared the center of the court, where he was soon joined by Willoughby, when, together, they made a rush at a door, and actually succeeded in gaining their own party on the roof. It was not in nature for the young soldier to remain here, however, while his mother, Beulah, and, so far as he knew, Maud lay exposed to the savages below. Amid a shower of bullets he collected his whole force, and was on the point of charging into the court, when the roll of a drum without brought everything to a stand. Young Blodget, who had displayed the ardor of a hero and the coolness of a veteran throughout the short fray, sprang down the stairs unarmed at this sound, passed through the astonished crowd in the court, unnoticed, and rushed to the outer gate. He had barely time to unbar it, when a body of troops marched through, led by a tall, manly-looking chief, who was accompanied by one that the young man instantly recognized, in spite of the darkness, for Mr. Woods, in his surplice. At the next moment, the strangers had entered, with military steadiness, into the court, to the number of at least fifty, ranging themselves in order across its area.

"In the name of Heaven, who are you?" called out Willoughby, from a window. "Speak at once, or we fire."

"I am Colonel Beekman, at head of a regular force," was the answer, "and if, as I suspect, you are Major Willoughby, you know that you are safe. In the name of Congress I command all good citizens to keep the peace, or they will meet with punishment for their contumacy."

This announcement ended the war, Beekman and Willoughby grasping each other's hands fervently, at the next instant.

"Oh! Beekman!" exclaimed the last, "at what a moment has God sent you hither! Heaven be praised! notwithstanding all that has happened you will find your wife and child safe. Place sentinels at both gates; for treachery has been at work here, and I shall ask for rigid justice."

"Softly—softly—my good fellow," answered Beekman, pressing his hand. "Your own position is a little delicate, and we must proceed with moderation. I learned, just in time, that a party was coming hither, bent on mischief; and obtaining the necessary authority, I hastened to the nearest garrison, obtained a company, and commenced my march as soon as possible. Had we not met with Mr. Woods traveling for the settlements in quest of succor, we might have been too late. As it was, God be praised!—I think we have arrived in season."

Such were the facts. The Indians had repelled the zealous chaplain as a madman; compelling him to take the route toward the settlement, however; their respect for this unfortunate class of beings rendering them averse to his rejoining their enemies. He could, and did impart enough to Beekman to quicken his march, and to bring him and his followers up to the gate at a time when a minute might have cost the entire garrison their lives.

Anxious as he was to seek Beulah and his child, Beekman had a soldier's duties to perform, and those he would not neglect. The sentinels were posted, and orders issued to light lanterns, and to make a fire in the center of the court, so that the actual condition of the field of battle might be ascertained. A surgeon had accompanied Beekman's party, and he was already at work, so far as the darkness would allow. Many hands were being employed, and combustibles easy to be found, ere long the desired light was gleaming on the terrible spectacle.

A dozen bodies were stretched in the court, of which three or four were fated never to rise again in life. Of the rest, no less than four had fallen with broken heads, inflicted by O'Hearn's shillelah. Though these blows were not fatal, they effectually put the warriors *hors de combat*. Of the garrison, not one was among the slain in this part of the field. On a later investigation, however, it was ascertained that the poor old Scotch mason had received a mortal hurt through a window, and this by the very last shot that had

been fired. On turning over the dead of the assailants, too, it was discovered that Daniel the Miller was of the number. A few of the Mohawks were seen with glowing eyes in corners of the court applying their own rude dressings to their various hurts; succeeding on the whole, in effecting the great purpose of the healing art, about as well as those who were committed to the lights of science.

Surprising few uninjured members of the assaulting party, however, were to be found when the lantern appeared. Some had slipped through the gate before the sentinels were posted; others had found their way to the roof, and thence by various means to the ground; while a few lay concealed in the buildings until a favorable moment offered to escape. Among all those who remained, not an individual was found who claimed to be in any authority. In a word, after five minutes of examination, both Beekman and Willoughby were satisfied that there no longer existed a force to dispute with them the mastery of the Hut.

"We have delayed too long relieving the apprehensions of those who are very dear to us, Major Willoughby," Beekman at length observed. "If you will lead the way to the parts of the buildings where your—my mother and wife are to be found, I will now follow you."

"Hold, Beekman—there yet remains a melancholy tale to be told—nay, start not, I left our Beulah and your boy in perfect health less than a quarter of an hour since. But my honored, honorable, revered, beloved father has been killed in a most extraordinary manner, and you will find his widow and daughters weeping over his body."

This appalling intelligence produced a halt, during which Willoughby explained all he knew of the manner of his father's death, which was merely the little he had been enabled to glean from Maud. As soon as this duty was performed, the gentlemen proceeded together to the apartment of the mourners, each carrying a light.

Willoughby made an involuntary exclamation, when he perceived that the door of his mother's room was open. He had hoped Maud would have had the presence of mind to close and lock it; but here he found it, yawning as if to invite the entrance of enemies. The light within, too, was extinguished, though by the aid of the lanterns he saw large traces of blood in the ante-room, and the passages he was obliged to tread. All this hastened his steps. Presently he stood in the chamber of death.

Short as had been the struggle, the thirst for scalps had led some of the savages to this sanctuary. The instant the Indians had gained the court, some of the most ferocious of their number had rushed into the building, penetrating its recesses in a way to defile them with slaughter. The first object that Willoughby saw was one of these ruthless warriors stretched on the floor, with a living Indian, bleeding at half a dozen wounds, standing over him; the eye-balls of the latter were glaring like the tiger's that is suddenly confronted to a foe. An involuntary motion was made toward the rifle he carried by the major; but the next look told him that the living Indian was Nick. Then it was that he gazed more steadily about him, and took in all the horrible truths of that fatal chamber.

Mrs. Willoughby was seated in the chair where she had last been seen, perfectly dead. No mark of violence was ever found on her body, however, and there is no doubt that her constant spirit had followed that of her husband to the other world, in submission to the blow which had separated them. Beulah had been shot; not, as was afterward ascertained, by any intentional aim, but by one of those random bullets, of which so many had been flying through the buildings. The missile had passed through her heart, and she lay pressing the little Evert to her bosom, with that air of steady and unerring affection which had marked every act of her innocent and feeling life. The boy himself, thanks to the tiger-like gallantry of Nick, had escaped unhurt. Tuscarora had seen a party of six take the direction of this chamber, and he followed with an instinct of their intentions. When

the leader entered the room and found three dead bodies, he raised a yell, and betokened his delight at the prospect of gaining so many scalps; at the next instant, while his fingers were actually entwined in the hair of Captain Willoughby, he fell from a blow from Wyandotte. Nick next extinguished the lamp, and then succeeded a scene which none of the actors themselves could have described. Another Mohawk fell, and the remainder, after suffering horribly from the keen knife of Nick, as well as from blows received from each other, dragged themselves away, leaving the field to the Tuscarora. The latter met the almost bewildered gaze of the major with a smile of grim triumph, as he pointed to the three bodies of the beloved ones, and said:

"See—all got scalp! Deat', nothin'—scalp, eberyt'ing."

We shall not attempt to describe the outbreaking of anguish from the husband and brother. It was a moment of wild grief, that bore down all the usual restraints of manhood, though it was such a moment as an American frontier residence has often witnessed. The quiet, but deep-feeling nature of Beekman received a shock that almost produced a dissolution of his earthly being. He succeeded, however, in raising the still warm body of Beulah from the floor, and folding it to his heart. Happily for his reason, a flood of tears, such as women shed, burst from his soul rather than from his eyes, bedewing her still sweet and placid countenance.

To say that Robert Willoughby did not feel the desolation, which so suddenly alighted on a family that had often been quoted for its mutual affection and happiness, would be to do him great injustice. He even staggered under the blow, yet his heart craved further information. The Indian was gazing intently on the sight of Beekman's grief, partly in wonder, but more in sympathy, when he felt an iron pressure of his arm.

"Maud—Tuscarora"—the major rather groaned than whispered in his ear, "know you anything of Maud?"

Nick made a gesture of assent, then motioned for the other to follow. He led the way to the store-room, produced the key, and throwing open the door, Maud was weeping on Robert Willoughby's bosom in another instant. He would not take her to the chamber of death, but urged her, by gentle violence, to follow him to the library.

"God be praised for this mercy!" exclaimed the ardent girl, raising her hands and streaming eyes to heaven. "I know not, care not, who is conqueror, since you are safe!"

"Oh! Maud—beloved one—we must now be all in all to each other. Death has stricken the others."

This was a sudden and involuntary announcement, though it was best it should be so under the circumstances. It was long before Maud could hear an outline, even, of the details, but she bore them better than Willoughby could have hoped. The excitement had been so high as to brace the mind to meet any human evil. The sorrow that came afterward, though sweetened by so many tender recollections and chastened hopes, was deep and enduring.

Our picture would not have been complete, without relating the catastrophe that befell the Hutted Knoll; but, having discharged this painful duty, we prefer to draw a veil over the remainder of that dreadful night. The cries of the negresses, when they learned the death of their old and young mistress, disturbed the silence of the place for a few minutes, and then a profound stillness settled on the buildings, marking them distinctly as the house of mourning. On further inquiry, too, it was ascertained that Great Smash, after shooting an Oneida, had been slain and scalped. Pliny the younger also fell fighting like a wild beast to defend the entrance to his mistresses' apartments.

The following day, when light had returned, a more accurate idea was obtained of the real state of the valley. All of the invading party, the dead and wounded excepted, had made a rapid retreat, accompanied by most of the deserters and their families. The name, known influence, and actual authority of Colonel Beekman had

CHAPTER XXX.

"I shall go on through all eternity,
Thank God, I am only an embryo still:
The small beginning of a glorious soul,
An atom that shall fill immensity."—COXE.

A FORTNIGHT elapsed ere Willoughby and his party could tear themselves from a scene that had witnessed so much domestic happiness; but on which had fallen the blight of death. During that time, the future arrangements of the survivors were completed. Beekman was made acquainted with the state of feeling that existed between his brother-in-law and Maud, and he advised an immediate union.

"Be happy while you can," he said, with bitter emphasis. "We live in troubled times, and Heaven knows when we shall see better. Maud has not a blood-relation in all America, unless there may happen to be some in the British army. Though we should all be happy to protect and cherish the dear girl, she herself would probably prefer to be near those whom nature has appointed her friends. To me, she will always seem a sister, as you must ever be a brother. By uniting yourselves at once, all appearances of impropriety will be avoided; and in time, God averting evil, you can introduce your wife to her English connections."

"You forget, Beekman, that you are giving this advice to one who is a prisoner on parole, and one who may possibly be treated as a spy."

"No—that is impossible. Schuyler, our noble commander, is both just and a gentleman. He will tolerate nothing of the sort. Your exchange can easily be effected, and, beyond your present difficulties, I can pledge myself to be able to protect you."

Willoughby was not averse to following this advice; and he urged it upon Maud, as the safest and most prudent course they could pursue. Our heroine, however, was so reluctant even to assuming the appearance of happiness, so recently after the losses she had experienced, that the lover's task of persuasion was by no means easy. Maud was totally free from affectation, while she possessed the keenest sense of womanly propriety. Her intercourse with Robert Willoughby had been one of the tenderest and most confidential nature, above every pretense of concealment, and was rendered sacred by the scenes through which they had passed. Her love, her passionate, engrossing attachment, she did not scruple to avow; but she could not become a bride while the stains of blood seemed so recent on the very hearth around which they were sitting. She still saw the forms of the dead, in their customary places, heard their laughs, the tones of their affectionate voices, the maternal whisper, the playful, paternal reproof, or Beulah's gentle call.

"Yet, Robert," said Maud, for she could now call him by that name, and drop the desperate familiarity of "Bob"—"yet, Robert, there would be a melancholy satisfaction in making our vows at the altar of the little chapel, where we have so often worshiped together—the loved ones who are gone and we who alone remain."

"True, dearest Maud; and there is another reason why we should quit this place only as man and wife. Beekman has owned that a question will probably be raised among the authorities at Albany concerning the nature of my visit here. It might relieve him from an appeal to more influence than would be altogether pleasant, did I appear as a bridegroom rather than as a spy."

The word "spy" settled the matter. All ordinary considerations were lost sight of, under the apprehensions it created, and Maud frankly consented to become a wife that very day. The ceremony was performed by Mr. Woods accordingly, and the little chapel witnessed tears of bitter recollections mingling with the smiles with which the bride received the warm embrace of her husband, after the benediction was pronounced. Still, all felt that, under the circumstances, delay would have been unwise. Maud saw a species of holy solemnity in a ceremony so closely connected with scenes so sad.

A day or two after the marriage, all that remained of those who had so lately crowded the Hut left the valley together. The valuables were packed and transported to boats lying in the stream below

the mills. All the cattle, hogs etc., were collected and driven toward the settlements; and horses were prepared for Maud and the females, who were to thread the path that led to Fort Stanwix. In a word, the Knoll was to be abandoned, as a spot unfit to be occupied in such a war. None but laborers, indeed, could or would remain, and Beekman thought it wisest to leave the spot entirely to nature, for the few succeeding years.

There had been some rumors of confiscations by the new State, and Willoughby had come to the conclusion that it would be safer to transfer this property to one who would be certain to escape such an infliction than to retain it in his own hands. Little Evert was entitled to receive a portion of the captain's estate by justice, if not by law. No will had been found, and the son succeeded as heir-at-law. A deed was accordingly drawn up by Mr. Woods, who understood such matters, and being duly executed, the Beaver Dam property was vested in fee in the child. His own thirty thousand pounds, the personals he inherited from his mother, and Maud's fortune, to say nothing of the major's commission, formed an ample support for the new-married pair.

When all was settled and made productive, indeed, Willoughby found himself the master of between three and four thousand sterling a year, exclusive of his allowances from the British government, an ample fortune for that day. In looking over the accounts of Maud's fortune, he had reason to admire the rigid justice and free-handed liberality with which his father had managed her affairs. Every farthing of her income had been transferred to capital, a long minority nearly doubling the original investment. Unknown to himself, he had married one of the richest heiresses then to be found in the American colonies. This was unknown to Maud, also; though it gave her great delight on her husband's account, when she came to learn the truth.

Albany was reached in due time, though not without encountering the usual difficulties. Here the party separated. The remaining Plinies and Smashes were all liberated, handsome provisions made for their little wants, and good places found for them, in the connections of the family to which they had originally belonged. Mike announced his determination to enter a corps that was intended expressly to fight the Indians. He had a long score to settle, and having no wife or children, he thought he might amuse himself in this way, during a revolution, as well as in any other.

"If yer honor was going anywhere near the County Leitrim," he said, in answer to Willoughby's offer to keep him near himself, "I might travel in company; seein' that a man likes to look on ould faces now and then. Many thanks for this bag of gold, which will sarve to buy scalps wid'; for divil bur-r-n me if I don't carry on *that* trade, for some time to come. T'ree cuts wid a knife, half a dozen pokes in the side, and a bullet scraping the head, makes a man mindful of what has happened; to say nothing of the captain, and Madam Willoughby, and Miss Beuly—God forever bless and presarve 'em all t'ree—and, if there was such a thing as a bit of a church in this counthry, wouldn't I use this gould for masses?—*dat* I would, and let the scalps go to the devil!"

This was an epitome of the views of Michael O'Hearn. No arguments of Willoughby's could change his resolution; but he set forth, determined to illustrate his career by procuring as many Indian scalps, as an atonement for the wrongs done "Madam Willoughby and Miss Beuly," as came within his reach.

"And you, Joyce," said the major, in an interview he had with the sergeant, shortly after reaching Albany; "I trust *we* are not to part. Thanks to Colonel Beekman's influence and zeal, I am already exchanged, and shall repair to New York next week. You are a soldier; and these are times in which a *good* soldier is of some account. I think I can safely promise you a commission in one of the new provincial regiments about to be raised."

"I thank your honor, but do not feel at liberty to accept the offer. I took service

with Captain Willoughby for life; had he lived, I would have followed wherever he led. But that enlistment has expired; and I am now like a recruit before he takes the bounty. In such cases a man has always a right to pick his corps. Politics I do not much understand; but when the question comes up of pulling a trigger *for* or *against* his country, an *unengaged* man has a right to choose. Between the two, meaning no reproach to yourself, Major Willoughby, who had regularly taken service with the other side, before the war began—but, between the two, I would rather fight an Englishman than an American."

"You may possibly be right, Joyce; though, as you say, my service is taken. I hope you follow the dictates of conscience, as I am certain I do myself. We shall never meet in arms, however, if I can prevent it. There is a negotiation for a lieutenant-colonelcy going on, which, if it succeed, will carry me to England. I shall never serve an hour longer against these colonies, if it be in my power to avoid it."

"*States*, with your permission, Major Willoughby," answered the sergeant, a little stiffly. "I am glad to hear it, sir; for, though I wish my enemies good soldiers, I would rather not have the son of my old captain among them. Captain Beekman has offered to make me sergeant-major of his own regiment; and we both of us join next week."

Joyce was as good as his word; he became sergeant-major, and, in the end, lieutenant and adjutant of the regiment he had mentioned. He fought in most of the principal battles of the war, and retired at the peace, with an excellent character. Ten years later he fell in one of the murderous Indian affairs that occurred during the first Presidential term, a gray-headed captain of foot. The manner of his death was not to be regretted, perhaps, as it was what he had always wished might happen, but it was a singular fact that Mike stood over his body and protected it from mutilation; the County Leitrim-man having turned soldier by trade, re-enlisting regularly, as soon as at liberty, and laying up scalps on all suitable occasions.

Blodget, too, had followed Joyce to the wars. The readiness and intelligence of this young man, united to a courage of proof, soon brought him forward, and he actually came out of the Revolution a captain. His mind, manners and information advancing with himself, he ended his career, not many years since, a prominent politician in one of the new States; a general in the militia—no great preferment, by the way, for one who had been a corporal at the Hut—and a legislator. Worse men have often acted in all these capacities among us; and it was said, with truth, at the funeral of General Blodget, an accident that does not always occur on such occasions, that "another Revolutionary hero is gone." Beekman was never seen to smile from the moment he first beheld the dead body of Beulah, lying with little Evert in her arms. He served faithfully until near the close of the war, falling in battle only a few months previously to the peace. His boy preceded him to the grave, leaving, as confiscations had gone out of fashion by that time, his uncle heir-at-law, again, to the same property that he had conferred on himself.

As for Willoughby and Maud, they were safely conveyed to New York, where the former rejoined his regiment. Our heroine here met her great uncle, General Meredith, the first of her own blood relations whom she had seen since infancy. Her reception was grateful to her feelings; and, there being a resemblance in years, appearance, and manners, she transferred much of that affection, which she had thought interred forever in the grave of her reputed father, to this revered relative. He became much attached to his lovely niece, himself; and, ten years later, Willoughby found his income quite doubled, by his decease.

At the expiration of six months, the gazette that arrived from England announced the promotion of "Sir Robert Willoughby, Bart., late major in the —th, to be lieutenant-colonel by purchase, in His Majesty's —th regiment of foot."

This enabled Willoughby to quit America; to which quarter of the world he had no occasion to be sent during the remainder of the war.

Of that war itself, there is little occasion to speak. Its progress and termination have long been matters of history. The independence of America was acknowledged by England in 1783; and, immediately after, the republicans commenced the conquest of their widespread domains by means of the arts of peace. In 1785, the first great assaults were made on the wilderness, in that mountainous region which has been the principal scene of our tale. The Indians had been driven off, in a great measure, by the events of the Revolution; and the owners of estates, granted under the crown, began to search for their lands in the untenanted woods. Such isolated families, too, as had taken refuge in the settlements, now began to return to their deserted possessions; and soon the smokes of clearings were obscuring the sun. Whitestown, Utica, on the site of old Fort Stanwix, Cooperstown, for years the seat of justice for several thousand square miles of territory, all sprang into existence between the years 1785 and 1790. Such places as Oxford, Binghamton, Norwich, Sherburne, Hamilton, and twenty more, that now dot the region of which we have been writing, did not then exist even in name; for, in that day, the appellation and maps came after the place; whereas, now, the former precede the last.

The last ten years that elapsed between 1785 and 1795 did wonders for all this mountain district. More favorable lands lay spread in the great west, but the want of roads and remoteness from the markets prevented their occupation. For several years, therefore, the current of emigration which started out of the eastern States, the instant peace was proclaimed, poured its tide into the counties mentioned in our opening chapter—counties as they are to-day; county, ay, and fragment of a county, as they were then.

The "New York Gazette," a journal that frequently related facts that actually occurred, announced in its number of June 11th, 1795, "His Majesty's Packet that has just arrived"—it required half a century to teach the journalists of this country the propriety of saying "His Britannic Majesty's Packet," instead of "His Majesty's," a bit of good taste, and of good sense, that many of them have yet to learn—"has brought out," home would have been better, "among her passengers, Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Willoughby, and his lady, both of whom are natives of this State. We welcome them back to their land of nativity, where we can assure them they will be cordially received, notwithstanding old quarrels. Major Willoughby's kindness to American prisoners is gratefully remembered; nor is it forgotten that he desired to exchange to another regiment in order to avoid further service in this country."

It will be conceded, this was a very respectable puff for the year 1795, when something like moderation, truth, and propriety was observed on such occasions. The effect was to bring the English General's name into the mouths of the whole State; a baronet causing a greater sensation then, in America, than a duke would produce to-day. It had the effect, however, of bringing around General Willoughby many of his father's and his own old friends, and he was as well received in New York twelve years after the termination of the conflict, as if he had fought on the other side. The occurrence of the French revolution, and the spread of doctrines that were termed jacobinical, early removed all the dissensions between a large portion of the whigs of America and the tories of England, on this side of the water at least; and Providence only can tell what might have been the consequences had this feeling been thoroughly understood on the other.

Passing over all political questions, however, our narrative calls us to the relation of its closing scene. The visit of Sir Robert and Lady Willoughby to the land of their birth was, in part, owing to feeling; in part, to a proper regard for the future provision of their children. The baronet had bought the ancient paternal estate of his family in England, and having two

daughters, besides an only son, it occurred to him that the American property, called the Hutted Knoll, might prove a timely addition to the ready money he had been able to lay up from his income. Then, both he and his wife had a deep desire to revisit those scenes where they had first learned to love each other, and which still held the remains of so many who were dear to them.

The cabin of a suitable sloop was therefore engaged, and the party, consisting of Sir Robert, his wife, a man and woman-servant, and a sort of American courier engaged for the trip, embarked on the morning of the 25th of July. On the afternoon of the 30th the sloop arrived in safety at Albany, where a carriage was hired to proceed the remainder of the way by land. The route by old Fort Stanwix, as Utica was still generally called, was taken. Our travelers reached it on the evening of the third day; the "Sands," which are now traversed in less than an hour, then occupying more than half of the first day. When at Fort Stanwix, a passable country road was found, by which the travelers journeyed until they reached a tavern that united many of the comforts of a coarse civilization with frontier simplicity. Here they were given to understand they had only a dozen miles to go in order to reach the Knoll.

It was necessary to make the remainder of the journey on horseback. A large, untenanted estate lay between the highway and the valley, across which no public road had yet been made. Footpaths, however, abounded, and the rivulet was found without any difficult. It was, perhaps, fortunate for the privacy of the Knoll that it lay in the line of no frequented route, and, squatters being rare in that day, Willoughby saw, the instant he struck the path that followed the sinuosities of the stream, that it had been seldom trodden in the interval of the nineteen years which had occurred since he had last seen it himself. The evidences of this fact increased as the stream was ascended, until the travelers reached the mill, when it was found that the spirit of destruction, which so widely prevails in the loose state of society that exists in all new countries, had been at work. Every one of the buildings at the falls had been burnt; probably as much because it was in the power of some reckless wanderer to work mischief, as for any other reason. That the act was the result of some momentary impulse, was evident in the circumstance that the mischief went no further. Some of the machinery had been carried away, however, to be set up in other places, on a principle that is very widely extended through all border settlements, which considers the temporary disuse of property as its virtual abandonment.

It was a moment of pain and pleasure, strangely mingled, when Willoughby and Maud reached the rocks, and got a first view of the ancient Beaver Dam. All the buildings remained, surprisingly little altered to the eye by the lapse of years. The gates had been secured when they left the place, in 1776; and the Hut having no accessible external windows, that dwelling remained positively intact. It is true, quite half the palisades were rotted down; but the Hut itself had resisted the ravages of time. A fire had been kindled against its side, but the stone walls had opposed an obstacle to its ravages; and an attempt, by throwing a brand upon the roof, had failed of its object, the shingles not igniting. On examination, the lock of the inner gate was still secure. The key had been found, and, on its application, an entrance was obtained into the court.

What a moment was that, when Maud, fresh from the luxuries of an English home, entered this long and well remembered scene of her youth! Rank grasses were growing in the court, but they soon disappeared before the scythes that had been brought, in expectation of the circumstance. Then, all was clear for an examination of the house. The Hut was exactly in the condition in which it had been left, with the exception of a little, and a very little, dust collected by time.

Maud was still in the bloom of womanhood, feminine, beautiful, full of feeling, and as sincere as when she left these woods, though her feelings were tempered a little by intercourse with the world. She went

from room to room, hanging on Willoughby's arm, forbidding any to follow. All the common furniture had been left in the house, in expectation it would be inhabited again, ere many years; and this helped to preserve the identity. The library was almost entire; the bedrooms, the parlors, and even the painting-room, were found very much as they would have appeared after an absence of a few months. Tears flowed in streams down the cheeks of Lady Willoughby, as she went through room after room, and recalled to the mind of her husband the different events of which they had been the silent witnesses. Thus passed an hour or two of unutterable tenderness, blended with a species of holy sorrow. At the end of that time, the attendants, of whom many had been engaged, had taken possession of the offices, etc., and were bringing the Hut once more into habitable condition. Soon, too, a report was brought that the mowers, who had been brought in anticipation of their services being wanted, had cut a broad swathe to the ruins of the chapel, and the graves of the family.

It was now near the setting of the sun, and the hour was favorable for the melancholy duty that remained. Forbidding any to follow, Willoughby proceeded with Maud to the graves. These had been dug within a little thicket of scrubs, planted by poor Jamie Allen, under Maud's own directions. She had then thought that the spot might one day be wanted. These bushes, lilacs, and syringas had grown to a vast size, in that rich soil. They completely concealed the space within, an area of some fifty square feet, from the observation of those without. The grass had been cut over all, however, and an opening made by the mowers gave access to the graves. On reaching this opening, Willoughby started at hearing voices within the inclosure; he was about to reprove the intruders, when Maud pressed his arm, and whispered—

"Listen, Willoughby — those voices sound strangely to my ears! We have heard them before."

"I tell ye, Nick—ould Nicky, or Saucy Nick, or whatever's your name," said one within, in a strong Irish accent, "that Jamie, the mason that was, is forenent ye, at this minute, under that bit of sod—and it's his honor and Missus, and Miss Beuly, that's buried here. Och! ye're a cr'ature, Nick; good at takin' scalps, but ye knows nothin' of graves, barrin' the quantity ye've helped to fill."

"Good"—answered the Indian. "Cap-'in here; squaw here; dater here. Where son? Where t'other gal?"

"Here," answered Willoughby, leading Maud within the hedge. "I am Robert Willoughby, and this is Maud Meredith, my wife."

Mike fairly started; he even showed a disposition to seize a musket which lay on the grass. As for the Indian, a tree in the forest could not have stood less unmoved than he was at this unexpected interruption. Then all four stood in silent admiration, noting the changes which time had, more or less, wrought in all.

Willoughby was in the pride of manhood. He had served with distinction, and his countenance and frame both showed it, though neither had suffered more than was necessary to give him a high military air, and a look of robust vigor. As for Maud, her graceful form fully developed by her riding-habit, her soft lineaments and polished expression, no one would have thought her more than thirty, which was ten years less than her real age. With Mike and Nick it was very different. Both had grown old, not only in fact, but in appearance. The Irishman was turned of sixty, and his hard, coarse-featured face, burnt as red as the sun in a fog, by exposure and Santa Cruz, was getting to be wrinkled and a little emaciated. Still, his frame was robust and powerful. His attire was none of the best, and it was to be seen at a glance that it was more than half military. In point of fact the poor fellow had been refused a re-enlistment in the army, on account of his infirmities and years, and America was not then a country to provide retreats for her veterans. Still, Mike had an ample pension for wounds, and could not he said to be in

want. He had suffered in the same battle with Joyce, in whose company he had actually been Corporal O'Hearn, though his gallant commander had not risen to fight again, as had been the case with the subordinate.

Wyandotte exhibited still greater changes. He had seen his three-score and ten years; and was fast falling into the "sere and yellow leaf." His hair was getting gray, and his frame, though still active and sinewy, would have yielded under the extraordinary marches he had once made. In dress there was nothing to remark; his ordinary Indian attire being in as good condition as was usual for the man. Willoughby thought, however, that his eye was less wild than when he knew him before; and every symptom of intemperance had vanished, not only from his countenance, but his person.

From the moment Willoughby appeared a marked change came over the countenance of Nick. His dark eye, which still retained much of its brightness, turned in the direction of the neighboring chapel, and he seemed relieved when a rustling in the bushes announced a footstep. There had not been another word spoken when the lilacs were shoved aside, and Mr. Woods, a vigorous little man, in a green old age, entered the area. Willoughby had not seen the chaplain since they parted at Albany, and the greetings were as warm as they were unexpected.

"I have lived a sort of hermit's life, my dear Bob, since the death of your blessed parents," said the divine, clearing his eyes of tears, "now and then cheered by a precious letter from yourself and Maud—I call you both by the names I gave you both in baptism—and it was 'I, Maud, take thee, Robert,' when you stood before the altar in that little edifice—you will pardon me if I am too familiar with a general officer and his lady—"

"Familiar!" exclaimed both in a breath; and Maud's soft white hand was extended towards the chaplain with reproachful earnestness—"We, who were made Christians by you, and who have so much reason to remember and love you always!"

"Well, well; I see you are Robert and Maud, still"—dashing streaming tears from his eyes now. "Yes, I did bring you both into God's visible church on earth, and you were baptized by one who received his ordination from the Archbishop of Canterbury himself"—Maud smiled a little archly—"and who has never forgotten his ordination vows, as he humbly trusts. But you are not the only Christians I have made—I now rank Nicholas among the number—"

"Nick!" interrupted Sir Robert—"Wyandotte!" added his wife, with a more delicate tact.

"I call him Nicholas, now, since he was christened by that name—there is no longer a Wyandotte or a Saucy Nick. Major Willoughby, I have a secret to communicate—I beg pardon, Sir Robert—but you will excuse old habits—if you will walk this way."

Willoughby was apart with the chaplain a full half hour, during which time Maud wept over the graves, the rest standing by in respectful silence. As for Nick, a stone could scarcely have been more fixed than his attitude. Nevertheless, his mien was rebuked, his eye downcast; even his bosom was singularly convulsed. He knew that the chaplain was communicating to Willoughby the manner in which he had slain his father. At length the gentlemen returned slowly toward the graves; the general agitated, frowning, and flushed. As for Mr. Woods, he was placid and full of hope. Willoughby had yielded to his expostulations and arguments a forgiveness, which came reluctantly, and perhaps as much for the want of a suitable object for retaliation as from a sense of Christian duty.

"Nicholas," said the chaplain, "I have told the general all."

"He know him!" cried the Indian, with startling energy.

"I do, Wyandotte; and sorry have I been to learn it. You have made my heart bitter."

Nick was terribly agitated. His youthful and former opinions maintained a fearful struggle with those which had come late in life; the result being a wild ad-

mixture of his sense of Indian justice, and submission to the tenets of his new and imperfectly-comprehended faith. For a moment, the first prevailed. Advancing with a firm step to the general, he put his own bright and keen tomahawk into the other's hands, folded his arms on his bosom, bowed his head a little, and said, firmly—

"Strike — Nick kill cap'in—major kill Nick."

"No, Tuscarora, no," answered Sir Robert Willoughby, his whole soul yielding to this act of humble submission. "May God in heaven forgive the deed, as I now forgive you."

There was a wild smile gleaming on the face of the Indian; he grasped both hands of Willoughby in his own. He then muttered the words, "God forgive," his eye rolled upward at the clouds, and he fell dead on the grave of his victim. It was thought afterward that agitation had accelerated the crisis of an incurable affection of the heart.

A few minutes of confusion followed. Then Mike, bare-headed, his old face flushed and angry, dragged from his pockets a string of strange-looking, hideous objects, and laid them by the Indian's side. They were human scalps, collected by himself in the course of many campaigns, and brought, as a species of hecatomb, to the graves of the fallen.

"Out, upon ye, Nick!" he cried. "Had I known the like of that, little would I have campaigned in yer company. Och! 'twas an undacent deed, and a hundred confessions would barely wipe it from yer sowl. It's a pity, too, that ye've died widout absolution from a praist, such as I've tould ye off. Barrin' the brache of good fellieship, I could have placed yer own scalp wid the rest, as a p'ace-offering to his honor, the missus, and Miss Beuly—"

"Enough," interrupted Sir Robert Willoughby, with an authority of manner that Mike's military habits could not resist; "the man has repented and is forgiven. Maud, love, it is time to quit this melancholy scene; occasions will offer to revisit it."

In the end Mr. Woods took possession of the Hut as a sort of hermitage, in which to spend the remainder of his days. He had toiled hard for the conversion of Nick, in gratitude for the manner in which he had fought in defense of the females. He now felt as keen a desire to rescue the Irishman from the superstitions of what he deemed an error quite as fatal as heathenism. Mike consented to pass the remainder of his days at the Knoll, which was to be, and in time was renovated, under their joint care.

Sir Robert and Lady Willoughby passed a month in the valley. Nick had been buried within the bushes; and even Maud had come to look upon this strange conjunction of graves, with the eye of a Christian blended with the tender regrets of a woman. The day that the general and his wife left the valley forever, they paid a final visit to the graves. Here Maud wept for an hour. Then her husband, passing an arm round her waist, drew her gently away; saying, as they were quitting the inclosure—

"They are in heaven, dearest—looking down in love, quite likely, on us, the objects of so much of their earthly affection. As for Wyandotte, he lived according to his habits and intelligence, and happily died under the convictions of a conscience directed by the lights of divine grace. Little will the deeds of this life be remembered, among those who have been the true subjects of its blessed influence. If this man were unmerciful in his revenge, he also remembered my mother's kindnesses, and bled for her and her daughters. Without his care, my life would have remained unblessed with your love, my ever-precious Maud. He never forgot a favor, or forgave an injury."

END OF "WYANDOTTE."

THE MONIKINS.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is not improbable that some of those who read this book may feel a wish to know in what manner I became possessed of the manuscript. Such a desire is too just and natural to be thwarted, and the tale shall be told as briefly as possible.

During the summer of 1828, while traveling among those valleys of Switzerland which lie between the two great ranges of the Alps, and in which both the Rhone and the Rhine take their rise, I had passed from the sources of the latter to those of the former river, and had reached that basin in the mountains that is so celebrated for containing the *glacier* of the Rhone, when chance gave me one of those rare moments of sublimity and solitude, which are the more precious in the other hemisphere from their infrequency. On every side the view was bounded by high and ragged mountains, their peaks glittering near the sun, while directly before me, and on a level with the eye, lay that miraculous frozen sea, out of whose drippings the Rhone starts a foaming river, to glance away to the distant Mediterranean. For the first time, during a pilgrimage of years, I felt alone with nature in Europe. Alas! the enjoyment, as all such enjoyments necessarily are amid the throngs of the old world, was short and treacherous. A party came round the angle of a rock, along the narrow bridle-path, in single file; two ladies on horseback, followed by as many gentlemen on foot, and preceded by the usual guide. It was but small courtesy to rise and salute the dove-like eyes and blooming cheeks of the former, as they passed. They were English, and the gentlemen appeared to recognize me as a countryman. One of the latter stopped, and politely inquired if the passage of the Furca was obstructed by snow. He was told not, and in return for the information, said that I would find the Grimsel a little ticklish; "but," he added, smiling, "the ladies succeeded in crossing, and you will scarcely hesitate." I thought I might get over a difficulty that his fair companions had conquered. He then told me Sir Herbert Taylor was made adjutant-general, and wished me good morning.

I sat reflecting on the character, hopes, pursuits, and interests of man, for an hour, concluding that the stranger was a soldier, who let some of the ordinary workings of his thoughts overflow in this brief and casual interview. To resume my solitary journey, across the Rhone, and toil my way up the rugged side of the Grimsel, consumed two more hours, and glad was I to come in view of the little chill-looking sheet of water on its summit, which is called the Lake of the Dead. The path was filled with snow, at a most critical point, where, indeed, a misplaced foot-step might betray the incautious to their destruction. A large party on the other side appeared fully aware of the difficulty, for it had halted, and was in earnest discussion with the guide, touching the practicability of passing. It was decided to attempt the enterprise. First came a female of one of the sweetest, serenest countenances I had ever seen. She, too, was English; and though she trembled, and blushed, and laughed at herself, she came on with spirit, and would have reached my side in safety, had not an unlucky stone turned beneath a foot that was much too pretty

for those wild hills. I sprang forward, and was so happy as to save her from destruction. She felt the extent of the obligation, and expressed her thanks modestly but with fervor. In a minute we were joined by her husband, who grasped my hand with warm feeling, or rather with the emotion one ought to feel who had witnessed the risk he had just run of losing an angel. The lady seemed satisfied at leaving us together.

"You are an Englishman?" said the stranger.

"An American."

"An American! This is singular—will you pardon a question? You have more than saved my life—you have probably saved my reason—will you pardon a question? Can money serve you?"

I smiled, and told him, odd as it might appear to him, that, though an American, I was a gentleman. He appeared embarrassed, and his fine face worked, until I began to pity him, for it was evident he wished to show me in some way, how much he felt he was my debtor, and yet he did not know exactly what to propose.

"We may meet again," I said, squeezing his hand.

"Will you receive my card?"

"Most willingly."

He put "Viscount Householder" into my hand, and in return I gave him my own humble appellation.

He looked from the card to me, and from me to the card, and some agreeable idea appeared to flash upon his mind.

"Shall you visit Geneva this summer?" he asked earnestly.

"Within a month."

"Your address—"

"Hôtel de l'Ecu."

"You shall hear from me. Adieu."

We parted, he, his lovely wife, and his guides descending to the Rhone, while I pursued my way to the Hospice of the Grimsel. Within the month I received a large packet at l'Ecu. It contained a valuable diamond ring, with a request that I would wear it, as a memorial of Lady Householder, and a fairly written manuscript. The following short note explained the wishes of the writer:

"Providence brought us together, for more purposes than were at first apparent. I have long hesitated about publishing the accompanying narrative, for in England there is a disposition to cavil at extraordinary facts, but the distance of America from my place of residence will completely save me from ridicule. The world must have the truth, and I see no better means than by resorting to your agency. All I ask is that you will have the book fairly printed, and that you will send one copy to my address, Householder Hall, Dorsetshire, England, and another to Captain Noah Poke, Stonington, Connecticut, in your own country. My Anna prays for you, and is ever your friend. Do not forget us.

"Yours, most faithfully,

"HOUSEHOLDER."

I have rigidly complied with this request, and having sent the two copies according to direction, the rest of the edition is at the disposal of any one who may feel an inclination to pay for it. In return for the copy sent to Stonington, I received the following letter:

"ON BOARD THE DERBY AND DOLLY,
STUNNIN'TON, April 1, 1835.

"AUTHOR OF THE SPY, ESQUIRE:

"*Dear Sir*—Your favor is come to hand, and found me in good health, as I hope these few lines will have the same advantage with you. I have read the book, and must say there is some truth in it, which, I suppose, is as much as befalls any book, the Bible, the Almanac, and the State Laws excepted. I remember Sir John well, and shall gainsay nothing he testifies to, for the reason that friends should not contradict each other. I was also acquainted with the four monikins he speaks of though I knew them by different names. Miss Poke says she wonders if it's all true, which I wunt tell her, seeing that a little unsartainty makes a woman rational. As to my navigating without geometry, that's a matter that wasn't worth booking, for it's no curiosity in these parts, bating a look at the compass once or twice a day, and so I take my leave of you, with offers to do any commission for you among the

Sealing Islands, for which I sail to-morrow, wind and weather permitting.

"Yours, to sarve,

"NOAH POKE.

"To the Author of THE SPY, Esquire.
"——town —— county, York State.

"P. S.—I always told Sir John to steer clear of too much journalizing, but he did nothing but write, night and day, for a week; and as you brew, so you must bake. The wind has chopped, and we shall take our anchor this tide; so no more at present.

"N. B.—Sir John is a little out about my eating the monkey, which I did, four years before I fell in with him, down on the Spanish Main. It was not bad food to the taste, but was wonderful narvous to the eye. I r'ally thought I had got hold of Miss Poke's youngest born."

CHAPTER I.

THE AUTHOR'S PEDIGREE,—ALSO THAT OF HIS FATHER.

THE philosopher who broaches a new theory is bound to furnish, at least, some elementary proofs of the reasonableness of his positions, and the historian who ventures to record marvels that have hitherto been hid from human knowledge, owes it to a decent regard to the opinions of others, to produce some credible testimony in favor of his veracity. I am peculiarly placed in regard to these two great essentials, having little more than its plausibility to offer in favor of my philosophy, and no other witness than myself to establish the important facts that are now about to be laid before the reading world for the first time. In this dilemma, I fully feel the weight of responsibility under which I stand; for there are truths of so little apparent probability as to appear fictitious, and fictions so like the truth that the ordinary observer is very apt to affirm that he was an eye-witness to their existence; two facts all our historians would do well to bear in mind, since a knowledge of the circumstances spare them the mortification of having testimony that cost a deal of trouble, discredited in the one case, and save a vast deal of painful and unnecessary labor, in the other. Thrown upon myself, therefore, for what the French call *les pièces justificatives* of my theories, as well as of my facts, I see no better way to prepare the reader to believe me, than by giving an unvarnished narrative of my descent, birth, education, and life, up to the time I became a spectator of those wonderful facts it is my happiness to record, and with which it is now his to be made acquainted.

I shall begin with my descent, or pedigree, both because it is in the natural order of events, and because, in order to turn this portion of my narrative to a proper account, in the way of giving credibility to the rest of it, it may be of use in helping to trace effects to their causes.

I have generally considered myself on a level with the most ancient gentlemen of Europe, on the score of descent, few families being more clearly and directly traced into the mist of time than that of which I am a member. My descent from my father is undeniably established by the parish register as well as by the will of that person himself, and I believe no man could more directly prove the truth of the whole career of his family than it is in my power to show that of my ancestor up the hour when he was found, in the second year of his age, crying with cold and hunger, in the parish of St. Giles, in the city of Westminster, and in the United Kingdom of Great Britain. An orange woman had pity on his sufferings. She fed him with a crust, warmed him with purl, and then humanely led him to an individual with whom she was in the habit of having frequent but angry interviews—the parish officer. The case of my ancestor was so obscure as to be clear. No one could tell to whom he belonged, whence he came, or what was likely to become of him; and as the law did not admit of the starvation of children in the street, under circumstances like these, the parish officer, after making all proper efforts to induce some of the childless and

benevolent of his acquaintance to believe that an infant thus abandoned was intended as an especial boon from Providence to each of them in particular, was obliged to commit my father to the keeping of one of the regular nurses of the parish.

It was fortunate for the authenticity of this pedigree, that such was the result of the orange-woman's application, for, had my worthy ancestor been subjected to the happy accidents and generous caprices of voluntary charity, it is more than probable I should be driven to throw a veil over those important years of his life that were notoriously passed in the workhouse, but which, in consequence of that occurrence, are now easily authenticated by valid minutes and documentary evidence. Thus it is that there exists no void in the annals of our family, even that period which is usually remembered through gossiping and idle tales in the lives of most men, being matter of legal record in that of my progenitor, and so continued to be down to the day of his presumed majority, since he was indebted to a careful master the moment the parish could with any legality, putting decency quite out of the question, get rid of him. I ought to have said, that the orange-woman, taking a hint from the sign of a butcher opposite to whose door my ancestors was found, had very cleverly given him the name of Thomas Goldencalf.

This second important transition in the affairs of my father, might be deemed a presage of his future fortunes. He was bound apprentice to a trader in fancy articles, or a shopkeeper who dealt in such objects as are usually purchased by those who do not well know what to do with their money. This trade was of immense advantage to the future prosperity of the young adventurer; for, in addition to the known fact that they who amuse are much better paid than they who instruct their fellow-creatures, his situation enabled him to study those caprices of men, which, properly improved, are of themselves a mine of wealth, as well as to gain a knowledge of the important truth that the greatest events of this life are much oftener the result of impulse than of calculation.

I have it by a direct tradition, orally conveyed from the lips of my ancestor, that no one could be more lucky than himself in the character of his master. This personage who came, in time, to be my maternal grandfather, was one of those wary traders who encourage others in their follies, with a view to his own advantage, and the experience of fifty years had rendered him so expert in the practices of his calling that it was seldom he struck out a new vein in his mine without finding himself rewarded for the enterprise, by a success that was fully equal to his expectations.

"Tom," he said one day to his apprentice, when time had produced confidence and awakened sympathies between them, "thou art a lucky youth, or the parish officer would never have brought thee to my door. Thou little knowest the wealth that is in store for thee, or the treasures that are at thy command, if thou provest diligent, and in particular faithful to my interests." My provident grandfather never missed an occasion to throw in a useful moral, notwithstanding the general character of veracity that distinguished his commerce. "Now, what dost think, lad, may be the amount of my capital?"

My ancestor in the male line hesitated to reply, for, hitherto, his ideas had been confined to the profits; never having dared to lift his thoughts as high as that source from which he could not but see they flowed in a very ample stream; but thrown upon himself by so unexpected a question, and being quick at figures, after adding ten per cent to the sum which he knew the last year had given as the net avail of their joint ingenuity, he named the amount in answer to the interrogatory.

My maternal grandfather laughed in the face of my direct lineal ancestor.

"Thou judgest, Tom," he said, when his mirth was a little abated, "by what thou thinkest is the cost of the actual stock before thine eyes, when thou shouldst take into the account that which I term our *floating* capital."

Tom pondered a moment, for while he knew that his master had money in the funds, he did not account that as any portion of the available means connected with his ordinary business; and as for a floating capital, he did not well see how it could be of much account, since the disproportion between the cost and the selling prices of the different articles in which they dealt was so great that there was no particular use in such an investment. As his master, however, rarely paid for anything until he was in possession of returns from it that exceeded the debt some seven-fold, he began to think the old man was alluding to the advantages he obtained in the way of credit, and after a little more cogitation, he ventured to say as much.

Again my maternal grandfather indulged in a hearty fit of laughter.

"Thou art clever in thy way, Tom," he said, "and I like the minuteness of thy calculations, for they show an aptitude for trade; but there is genius in our calling as well as cleverness. Come hither, boy," he added, drawing Tom to a window whence they could see the neighbors on their way to church, for it was on a Sunday that my two provident progenitors indulged in this moral view of humanity, as best fitted the day; "come hither, boy, and thou shalt see some portion of that capital which thou seemest to think hid, stalking abroad by daylight, and in the open streets. Here, thou seest the wife of our neighbor, the pastry-cook; with what an air she tosses her head and displays the bauble thou sold'st her yesterday; well, even that slattern, idle and vain, and little worthy of trust as she is, carries about with her a portion of my capital!"

My worthy ancestor stared, for he never knew the other to be guilty of so great an indiscretion as to trust a woman whom they both knew bought more than her husband was willing to pay for.

"She gave me a guinea, master, for that which did not cost a seven-shilling piece!"

"She did, indeed, Tom, and it was her *vanity* that urged her to do it. I trade upon her folly, younker, and upon that of all mankind; now dost thou see with what a capital I carry on affairs? There—there is the maid, carrying the idle hussy's pattens in the rear; I drew upon my stock in that wench's possession, no later than the last week, for half a crown!"

Tom reflected a long time on these allusions of his provident master, and although he understood them about as well as they will be understood by the owners of half the soft humid eyes and sprouting whiskers among my readers, by dint of cogitation he came at last to a practical understanding of the subject, which before he was thirty he had, to use a French term, pretty well *exploité*.

I learn by unquestionable tradition, received also from the mouths of his contemporaries, that the opinions of my ancestor underwent some material changes between the ages of ten and forty, a circumstance that has often led me to reflect that people might do well not to be too confident of the principles, during the pliable period of life, when the mind, like the tender shoot, is easily bent aside and subjected to the action of surrounding causes.

During the earlier years of the plastic age my ancestor was observed to betray strong feelings of compassion at the sight of charity-children, nor was he ever known to pass a child, especially a boy that was still in petticoats, who was crying with hunger in the streets, without sharing his own crust with him. Indeed, his practice on this head was said to be steady and uniform, whenever the rencontre took place after my worthy father had had his own sympathies quickened by a good dinner; a fact that may be imputed to a keener sense of the pleasure he was about to confer.

After sixteen he was known to converse occasionally on the subject of politics, a topic on which he came to be both expert and eloquent before twenty. His usual theme was justice and the sacred rights of man, concerning which he sometimes uttered very pretty sentiments, and such as were altogether becoming in one who was at the bottom of the great social

pot that was then, as now, actively boiling, and where he was made to feel most the heat that kept it in ebullition. I am assured that on the subject of taxation, and on that of the wrongs of America and Ireland, there were few youths in the parish who could discourse with more zeal and unction. About this time, too, he was heard shouting "Wilkes and liberty!" in the public streets.

But, as is the case with all men of rare capacities, there was a concentration of powers in the mind of my ancestor which soon brought all his errant sympathies, the mere exuberance of acute and overflowing feelings, into a proper and useful subjection, centering all in the one absorbing and capacious receptacle of self. I do not claim for my father any peculiar quality in this respect, for I have often observed that many of those who (like giddy-headed horsemen that raise a great dust, and scamper as if the highway were too narrow for their eccentric courses, before they are seated in the saddle, but who afterward drive as directly at their goals as the arrow parting from the bow), most indulge their sympathies at the commencement of their careers, are the most apt toward the close to get a proper command of their feelings, and to reduce them within the bounds of common sense and prudence. Before five-and-twenty my father was as exemplary and as constant a devotee of Plutus as was then to be found between Ratcliffe Highway and Bridge Street — I name these places in particular, as all the rest of the great capital in which he was born is known to be more indifferent to the subject of money.

My ancestor was just thirty, when his master, who, like himself, was a bachelor, very unexpectedly, and a good deal to the scandal of the neighborhood, introduced a new inmate into his frugal abode, in the person of an infant female child. It would seem that some one had been speculating on his stock of weakness, too, for this poor, little, defenseless and dependent being, was thrown upon his care, like Tom himself, through the vigilance of the parish officers. There were many good-natured jokes practiced on the prosperous fancy dealer, by the more witty of his neighbors, at this sudden turn of good fortune, and not a few ill-natured sneers were given behind his back; most of the knowing ones of the vicinity finding a stronger likeness between the little girl and all the other unmarried men of the eight or ten adjoining streets, than to the worthy housekeeper who had been selected to pay for her support. I have been much disposed to admit the opinions of these amiable observers as authority in my own pedigree, since it would be reaching the obscurity in which all ancient lines take root, a generation earlier, than by allowing the presumption that little Betsey was my direct male ancestor's master's daughter; but, on reflection, I have determined to adhere to the less popular but more simple version of the affair, because it is connected with the transmission of no small part of our estate, a circumstance of itself that at once gives dignity and importance to a genealogy.

Whatever may have been the real opinion of the reputed father touching his rights to the honors of that respectable title, he soon became as strongly attached to the child as if it really owed its existence to himself. The little girl was carefully nursed, abundantly fed, and throve accordingly. She had reached her third year, when the fancy-dealer took the small-pox from his little pet, who was just recovering from the same disease, and died at the expiration of the tenth day.

This was an unlooked-for and stunning blow to my ancestor, who was then in his thirty-fifth year and the head shopman of the establishment, which had continued to grow with the growing follies and vanities of the age. On examining his master's will, it was found that my father, who had certainly aided materially of late in the acquisition of the money, was left the good-will of the shop, the command of all the stock at cost, and the sole executorship of the estate. He was also intrusted with the exclusive guardianship of little Betsey, to whom his master had affectionately devised every farthing of his property. An ordinary reader may be surprised that a

man who had so long practiced on the foibles of his species, should have so much confidence in a mere shopman as to leave his whole estate so completely in his power; but, it must be remembered, that human ingenuity has not yet devised any means by which we can carry our personal effects into the other world; that "what cannot be cured must be endured;" that he must of necessity have confided this important trust to some fellow creature, and that it was better to commit the keeping of his money to one who, knowing the secret by which it had been accumulated, had less inducement to be dishonest, than one who was exposed to the temptation of covetousness, without having a knowledge of any direct and legal means of gratifying his longings. It has been conjectured, therefore, that the testator thought, by giving up his trade to a man who was as keenly alive as my ancestor to all its perfections, moral and pecuniary, he provided a sufficient protection against his falling into the sin of peculation, by so amply supplying him with simpler means of enriching himself.

Besides, it is fair to presume that the long acquaintance had begotten sufficient confidence to weaken the effect of that saying which some wit has put into the mouth of the wag, "Make me your executor, father: I care not to whom you leave the estate." Let all this be as it might, nothing can be more certain than that my worthy ancestor executed his trust with the scrupulous fidelity of a man whose integrity had been severely schooled in the ethics of trade. Little Betsey was properly educated for one in her condition of life; her health was as carefully watched over as if she had been the only daughter of the sovereign instead of the only daughter of a fancy-dealer; her morals were superintended by a superannuated old maid; her mind left to its original purity; her person jealously protected against the designs of greedy fortune-hunters; and, to complete the catalogue of his paternal attentions and solicitudes, my vigilant and faithful ancestor, to prevent accidents, and to counteract the chances of life, so far as it might be done by human foresight, saw that she was legally married, the day she reached her nineteenth year, to the person whom, there is every reason to think, he believed to be the most unexceptionable man of his acquaintance—in other words, to himself. Settlements were unnecessary between parties who had so long been known to each other, and, thanks to the liberality of his late master's will in more ways than one, a long minority, and the industry of the *ci-devant* head shopman, the nuptial benediction was no sooner pronounced, than our family stepped into the undisputed possession of four hundred thousand pounds. One less scrupulous on the subject of religion and the law, might not have thought it necessary to give the orphan heiress a settlement so satisfactory, at the termination of her wardship.

I was the fifth of the children who were the fruits of this union, and the only one of them all that passed the first year of its life. My poor mother did not survive my birth, and I can only record her qualities through the medium of that great agent in the archives of the family, tradition. By all that I have heard, she must have been a meek, quiet, domestic woman; who, by temperament and attainments, was admirably qualified to second the prudent plans of my father for her welfare. If she had causes of complaint (and that she had, there is too much reason to think, for who has ever escaped them?) they were concealed, with female fidelity, in the sacred repository of her own heart: and if truant imagination sometimes dimly drew an outline of married happiness different from the facts that stood in dull reality before her eyes, the picture was merely commented on by a sigh, and consigned to a cabinet whose key none had ever touched but herself, and she seldom.

Of this subdued and unobtrusive sorrow, for I fear it sometimes reached that intensity of feeling, my excellent and indefatigable ancestor appeared to have no suspicion. He pursued his ordinary occupations with his ordinary single-minded devotion, and the last thing that would have crossed his brain was the suspicion

that he had not punctiliously done his duty by his ward. Had he acted otherwise, none surely would have suffered more by his delinquency than her husband, and none would have a better right to complain. Now, as her husband never dreamt of making such an accusation, it is not at all surprising that my ancestor remained in ignorance of his wife's feelings to the hour of his death.

It has been said that the opinions of the successor of the fancy-dealer underwent some essential changes between the ages of ten and forty. After he had reached his twenty-second year, or, in other words, the moment he began to earn money for himself, as well as for his master, he ceased to cry "Wilkes and liberty!" He was not heard to breathe a syllable concerning the obligations of society toward the weak and unfortunate, for the five years that succeeded his majority; he touched lightly on Christian duties in general, after he got to be worth fifty pounds of his own; and as for railing at human follies, it would have been rank ingratitude in one who so very unequivocally got his bread by them. About this time, his remarks on the subject of taxation, however, were singularly caustic, and well applied. He railed at the public debt, as a public curse, and ominously predicted the dissolution of society, in consequence of the burdens and encumbrances it was hourly accumulating on the already overloaded shoulders of the trader.

The period of his marriage, and his succession to the hoardings of his former master, may be dated as the second epocha in the opinions of my ancestor. From this moment his ambition expanded, his views enlarged in proportion to his means, and his contemplations of the subject of his great floating capital became more profound and philosophical. A man of my ancestor's native sagacity, whose whole soul was absorbed in the pursuit of gain, who had so long been forming his mind, by dealing as it were with the elements of human weaknesses, and who already possessed four hundred thousand pounds, was very likely to strike out for himself some higher road to eminence, than that in which he had been laboriously journeying, during the years of painful probation. The property of my mother had been chiefly invested in good bonds and mortgages; her protector, patron, benefactor, and legalized father having an unconquerable repugnance to confiding in that soulless, conventional, nondescript body corporate, the public.

The first indication that was given by my ancestor of a change of purpose in the direction of his energies was by calling in the whole of his outstanding debts, and adopting the Napoleon plan of operations, by concentrating his forces on a particular point, in order that he might operate in masses. About this time, too, he suddenly ceased railing at taxation. This change may be likened to that which occurs in the language of the ministerial journals, when they cease abusing any foreign state with whom the nation has been carrying on a war, that it is, at length, believed politic to terminate; and for much the same reason, as it was the intention of my thrifty ancestor to make an ally of a power that he had hitherto always treated as an enemy. The whole of the four hundred thousand pounds were liberally intrusted to the country, the former fancy-dealer's apprentice entering the arena of virtuous and patriotic speculation, as a bull; and, if with more caution, with at least some portion of the energy and obstinacy of the desperate animal that gives title to this class of adventurers. Success crowned his laudable efforts; gold rolled in upon him like water on a flood, buoying him up, soul and body, to that enviable height, where, as it would seem, just views can alone be taken of society in its innumerable phases. All his former views of life, which, in common with others of a similar origin and similar political sentiments, he had imbibed in early years, and which might with propriety be called near views, were now completely obscured by the sublimer and broader prospect that was spread before him.

I am afraid the truth will compel me to admit, that my ancestor was never charitable in the vulgar acceptation of

the word; but then, he always maintained that his interest in his fellow creatures was of a more elevated cast, taking a comprehensive glance at all the bearings of good and evil—being of the sort of love which induces the parent to correct the child, that the lesson of present suffering may produce the blessings of future respectability and usefulness. Acting on these principles, he gradually grew more estranged from his species in appearance; a sacrifice that was probably exacted by the severity of his practical reproofs for their growing wickedness, and the austere policy that was necessary to enforce them. By this time, my ancestor was thoroughly impressed with what is called the value of money; a sentiment which, I believe, gives its possessor a livelier perception than common of the dangers of the precious metals, as well as of their privileges and uses. He expatiated occasionally on the guarantees that it was necessary to give to society, for its own security; never even voted for a parish officer unless he were a warm substantial citizen; and began to be a subscriber to the patriotic fund, and to the other similar little moral and pecuniary buttresses of the Government, whose common and commendable object was, to protect our country, our altars, and our firesides.

The death-bed of my mother has been described to me as a touching and melancholy scene. It appears that as this meek and retired woman was extricated from the coil of mortality, her intellect grew brighter, her powers of discernment stronger, and her character in every respect more elevated and commanding. Although she had said much less about our firesides and altars than her husband, I see no reason to doubt that she had ever been quite as faithful as he could be to the one, and as much devoted to the other. I shall describe the important event of her passage from this to a better world, as I have often had it repeated from the lips of one who was present, and who has had an important agency in since making me the man I am. This person was the clergyman of the parish, a pious divine, a learned man, and a gentleman in feeling as well as by extraction.

My mother, though long conscious that she was drawing near to her last great account, had steadily refused to draw her husband from his absorbing pursuits, by permitting him to be made acquainted with her situation. He knew that she was ill; very ill, as he had reason to think; but, as he not only allowed her, but even volunteered to order her all the advice and relief that money could command (my ancestor was not a miser in the vulgar meaning of the word), he thought he had done all that man could do, in a case of life and death—interests over which he professed to have no control. He saw Dr. Etherington, the rector, come and go daily for a month, without uneasiness or apprehension, for he thought his discourse had a tendency to tranquilize my mother, and he had a strong affection for all that left him undisturbed, to the enjoyment of the occupation in which his whole energies were now completely centered. The physician got his guinea at each visit, with scrupulous punctuality; the nurses were well received and were well satisfied, for no one interfered with their acts but the doctor; and every ordinary duty of commission was as regularly discharged by my ancestor, as if the sinking and resigning creature from whom he was about to be forever separated had been the spontaneous choice of his young and fresh affections.

When, therefore, a servant entered to say that Dr. Etherington desired a private interview, my worthy ancestor, who had no consciousness of having neglected any obligation that became a friend of Church and State, was in no small measure surprised.

"I come, Mr. Goldencalf, on a melancholy duty," said the pious rector, entering the private cabinet to which his application had for the first time obtained his admission; "the fatal secret can no longer be concealed from you, and your wife at length consents that I shall be the instrument of revealing it."

The doctor paused; for on such occasions it is perhaps as well to let the party

that is about to be shocked to receive a little of the blow through his own imagination; and busily enough was that of my poor father said to be exercised on this painful occasion. He grew pale, opened his eyes until they again filled the sockets into which they had gradually been sinking for twenty years, and looked a hundred questions that his tongue refused to put.

"It cannot be, doctor," he at length querulously said, "that a woman like Betsey has got an inkling into any of the events connected with the last great secret expedition, and which have escaped my jealousy and experience!"

"I am afraid, dear sir, that Mrs. Goldencalf has obtained glimpses of the last great and secret expedition on which we must all, sooner or later embark, that have entirely escaped you vigilance. But of this I will speak some other time. At present it is my painful duty to inform you it is the opinion of the physician that your excellent wife cannot outlive the day, if indeed, she do the hour."

My father was struck with this intelligence, and for more than a minute he remained silent and without motion. Casting his eyes toward the papers on which he had lately been employed, and which contained some very important calculations connected with the next settling day, he at length resumed:

"If this be really so, doctor, it may be well for me to go to her, since one in the situation of the poor woman may indeed have something of importance to communicate."

"It is with this object that I have now come to tell you the truth," quietly answered the divine, who knew that nothing was to be gained by contending with the besetting weakness of such a man at such a moment.

My father bent his head in assent, and, first carefully inclosing the open papers in a secretary, he followed his companion to the bedside of his dying wife.

CHAPTER II.

TOUCHING MYSELF AND TEN THOUSAND POUNDS.

ALTHOUGH my ancestor was much too wise to refuse to look back upon his origin in a worldly point of view, he never threw his retrospective glances so far as to reach the sublime mystery of his moral existence; and while his thoughts might be said to be ever on the stretch to attain glimpses into the future, they were by far too earthly to extend beyond any other settling day than those which were regulated by the ordinances of the stock exchange. With him, to be born was but the commencement of a speculation, and to die was to determine the general balance of profit and loss. A man who had so rarely meditated on the grave changes of mortality, therefore, was consequently so much the less prepared to gaze upon the visible solemnities of a death-bed. Although he had never truly loved my mother, for love was a sentiment much too pure and elevated for one whose imagination dwelt habitually on the beauties of the stock-books, he had ever been kind to her, and of late he was even much disposed, as has already been stated, to contribute as much to her temporal comforts as comported with his pursuits and habits. On the other hand, the quiet temperament of my mother required some more exciting cause than the affections of her husband, to quicken those germs of deep, placid, womanly love, that certainly lay dormant in her heart, like seed withering with the ungenial cold of winter. The last meeting of such a pair was not likely to be attended with any violent outpourings of grief.

My ancestor, notwithstanding, was deeply struck with the physical changes in the appearance of his wife.

"Thou art much emaciated, Betsey," he said, taking her hand kindly, after a long and solemn pause; "much more so than I had thought, or could have believed! Does nurse give thee comforting soups and generous nourishment?"

My mother smiled the ghastly smile of death; but waved her hand, with loathing, at his suggestion.

"All this is now too late, Mr. Goldencalf," she answered, speaking with a distinctness and an energy for which she had long been reserving her strength. "Food and raiment are no longer among my wants."

"Well, well, Betsey, one that is in want of neither food nor raiment cannot be said to be in great suffering, after all; and I am glad that thou art so much at ease. Dr. Etherington tells me thou art far from being well bodily, however, and I am come expressly to see if I can order anything that will help to make thee more easy."

"Mr. Goldencalf, you can. My wants for this life are nearly over; a short hour or two will remove me beyond the world, its cares, its vanities, its—" My poor mother probably meant to add, its heartlessness or its selfishness; but she rebuked herself, and paused, "By the mercy of our blessed Redeemer, and through the benevolent agency of this excellent man," she resumed, glancing her eye upward at first with holy reverence, and then at the divine with meek gratitude, "I quit you without alarm, and were it not for one thing, I might say without care."

"And what is there to distress thee, in particular, Betsey?" asked my father, blowing his nose, and speaking with unusual tenderness; "if it be in my power to set thy heart at ease on this, or on any other point, name it, and I will give orders to have it immediately performed. Thou hast been a good pious woman, and canst have little to reproach thyself with."

My mother looked earnestly and wistfully at her husband. Never before had he betrayed so strong an interest in her happiness, and had it not, alas! been too late, this glimmering of kindness might have lighted the matrimonial torch into a brighter flame than had ever yet glowed upon the past.

"Mr. Goldencalf, we have an only son—"

"We have, Betsey, and it may gladden thee to hear that the physician thinks the boy more likely to live than either of his poor brothers and sisters."

I cannot explain the holy and mysterious principle of maternal nature that caused my mother to clasp her hands, to raise her eyes to heaven, and, while a gleam flitted athwart her glassy eyes and wan cheeks, to murmur her thanks to God for the boon. She was herself hastening away to the eternal bliss of the pure of mind and the redeemed, and her imagination, quiet and simple as it was, had drawn pictures in which she and her departed babes were standing before the throne of the Most High, chanting his glory, and shining amid the stars—and yet was she now rejoicing that the last and the most cherished of all her offspring was likely to be left exposed to the evils, the vices, nay, to the enormities, of the state of being that she herself so willingly resigned.

"It is of our boy that I wish now to speak, Mr. Goldencalf," replied my mother, when her secret devotion was ended. "The child will have need of instruction and care; in short, of both mother and father."

"Betsey, thou forgettest that he will still have the latter."

"You are much wrapped up in your business, Mr. Goldencalf, and are not, in other respects, qualified to educate a boy born to the curse and to the temptations of immense riches."

My excellent ancestor looked as if he thought his dying consort had in sooth finally taken leave of her senses.

"There are public schools, Betsey; I promise thee the child shall not be forgotten: I will have him well taught, though it cost me a thousand a year!"

His wife reached forth her emaciated hand to that of my father, and pressed the latter with as much force as a dying mother could use. For a fleet moment she even appeared to have gotten rid of her latest care. But the knowledge of character that had been acquired by the hard experience of thirty years was not to be unsettled by the gratitude of a moment.

"I wish, Mr. Goldencalf," she anxiously resumed, "to receive your solemn promise to commit the education of our boy to Dr. Etherington—you know his worth, and must have full confidence in such a man."

"Nothing would give me greater satisfaction, my dear Betsey; and if Dr. Etherington will consent to receive him, I will send Jack to his house this very evening; for to own the truth, I am but little qualified to take charge of a child under a year old. A hundred a year, more or less, shall not spoil so good a bargain."

The divine was a gentleman, and he looked grave at this speech, though, meeting the anxious eyes of my mother, his own lost their displeasure in a glance of reassurance and pity.

"The charges of his education will be easily settled, Mr. Goldencalf," added my mother; "but the doctor has consented with difficulty to take the responsibility of my poor babe, and that only under two conditions."

The stock-dealer required an explanation with his eyes.

"One is, that the child shall be left solely to his own care, after he has reached his fourth year; and the other is, that you make an endowment for the support of two poor scholars, at one of the principal schools."

As my mother got out the last words, she fell back on her pillow, whence her interests in the subject had enabled her to lift her head a little, and she fairly gasped for breath, in the intensity of her anxiety to hear the answer. My ancestor contracted his brow, like one who saw it was a subject that required reflection.

"Thou dost not know perhaps, Betsey, that these endowments swallow up a great deal of money—a great deal—and often very uselessly."

"Ten thousand pounds is the sum that has been agreed upon between Mrs. Goldencalf and me," steadily remarked the Doctor, who, in my soul, I believe had hoped that his condition would be rejected, having yielded to the importunities of a dying woman, rather than to his own sense of that which might be either very desirable or very useful.

"Ten thousand pounds!"

My mother could not speak, though she succeeded in making an imploring sign of assent.

"Ten thousand pounds is a great deal of money, my dear Betsey—a very great deal!"

The color of my mother changed to the hue of death, and by her breathing she appeared to be in the agony.

"Well, well, Betsey," said my father a little hastily, for he was frightened at her pallid countenance and extreme distress, "have it thine own way—the money, yes, yes—it shall be given as thou wishest—now set thy kind heart at rest."

The revulsion of feeling was too great for one whose system had been wound up to a state of excitement like that which had sustained my mother, who, an hour before, had seemed scarcely able to speak. She extended her hand toward her husband, smiled benignantly in his face, whispered the word "Thanks," and then losing all her powers of body, sank into the last sleep, as tranquilly as the infant drops its head on the bosom of the nurse. This was, after all, a sudden, and, in one sense, an unexpected death; all who witnessed it were struck with awe. My father gazed for a whole minute intently on the placid features of his wife, and left the room in silence. He was followed by Dr. Etherington, who accompanied him to the private apartment where they had first met that night, neither uttering a syllable until both were seated.

"She was a good woman, Dr. Etherington!" said the widowed man shaking his foot with agitation.

"She was a good woman, Mr. Goldencalf."

"And a good wife, Dr. Etherington."

"I have always believed her to be a good wife, sir."

"Faithful, obedient, and frugal."

"Three qualities that are of much practical use in the affairs of this world."

"I shall never marry again, sir."

The divine bowed.

"Nay, I never could find such another match!"

Again the divine inclined his head, though the assent was accompained by a slight smile.

"Well, she has left me an heir."

"And brought something that he might inherit," observed the doctor, dryly.

My ancestor looked up inquiringly at his companion, but apparently most of the sarcasm was thrown away.

"I resign the child to your care, Dr. Etherington, conformably to the dying request of my beloved Betsey."

"I accept the charge, Mr. Goldencalf, conformably to my promise to the deceased; but you will remember that there was a condition coupled with that promise, which must be faithfully and promptly fulfilled."

My ancestor was too much accustomed to respect the punctilios of trade, whose code admits of frauds only in certain categories, which are sufficiently explained in its conventional rules of honor; a sort of specified morality, that is bottomed more on the convenience of its votaries than on the general law of right. He respected the letter of his promise, while his soul yearned to avoid its spirit; and his wits were already actively seeking the means of doing that which he so much desired.

"I did make a promise to poor Betsey, certainly," he answered, in the way of one who pondered, "and it was a promise, too, made under very solemn circumstances."

"The promise made to the dead are doubly binding; since, by their departure to the world of spirits, it may be said they leave the performance to the exclusive superintendence of the Being who cannot lie."

My ancestor quailed? his whole frame shuddered, and his purpose was shaken.

"Poor Betsey left you as her representative in this case, however, doctor," he observed, after the delay of more than a minute, casting his eyes wistfully toward the divine.

"In one sense, she certainly did, sir."

"And a representative with full powers is legally a principal under a different name. I think this matter might be arranged to our mutual satisfaction, Dr. Etherington, and the intention of poor Betsey most completely executed; she, poor woman, knew little of business, as was best for her sex; and when women undertake affairs of magnitude, they are very apt to make awkward work of it."

"So that the intention of the deceased be completely fulfilled, you will not find me exacting, Mr. Goldencalf."

"I thought as much—I knew there could be no difficulty between two men of sense, who were met with honest views to settle a matter of this nature. The intention of poor Betsey, doctor, was to place her child under your care with the expectation—and I do not deny its justice—that the boy would receive more benefit from your knowledge than he possibly could from mine."

Dr. Etherington was too honest to deny these premises, and too polite to admit them without an inclination of acknowledgment.

"As we are quite of the same mind, good sir, concerning the preliminaries," continued my ancestor, "we will enter a little nearer into the details. It appears to me to be no more than strict justice that he who does the work should receive the reward. This is a principle in which I have been educated, Dr. Etherington; it is one in which I could wish to have my son educated; and it is one on which I hope always to practice."

Another inclination of the body conveyed the silent assent of the divine.

"Now poor Betsey, Heaven bless her;—for she was a meek and tranquil companion, and richly deserves to be rewarded in a future state—but, poor Betsey had little knowledge of business. She fancied that, in bestowing these ten thousand pounds on a charity, she was acting well; whereas she was in fact committing injustice. If you are to have the trouble and care of bringing up little Jack, who but you should reap the reward?"

"I shall expect, Mr. Goldencalf, that you will furnish the means to provide for the child's wants."

"Of that, sir, it is unnecessary to speak," interrupted my ancestor, both promptly and proudly. "I am a wary man, and a prudent man, and am one who knows the value of man, I trust; but I am no miser, to stint my own flesh and blood. Jack shall never want for anything while it is in my power to give it. I am by no means as rich, sir, as the neighborhood supposes; but then I am no beggar. I daresay, if

all my assets were fairly counted, it might be found that I am worth a plum."

"You are said to have received a much larger sum than that with the late Mrs. Goldencalf," the divine observed, not without reproof in his voice.

"Ah, dear sir, I need not tell you what vulgar rumor is—but I shall not undermine my own credit; and we will change the subject. My object, Dr. Etherington, was merely to do justice. Poor Betsey desired that ten thousand pounds might be given to found a scholarship or two; now what have these scholars done, or what are they likely to do, for me or mine? The case is different with you, sir; you will have trouble—much trouble, I make no doubt; and it is proper that you should have a sufficient compensation. I was about to propose, therefore, that you should consent to receive my check for three, or four, or even for five thousand pounds," continued my ancestor, raising the offer as he saw the frown on the brow of the doctor deepen. "Yes, sir, I will even say the latter sum, which possibly will not be too much for your trouble and care; and we will forget the womanish plan of poor Betsey in relation to the two scholarships and the charity. Five thousand pounds down, doctor, for yourself, and the subject of the charity forgotten forever."

When my father had thus distinctly put his proposition, he awaited its effect with the confidence of a man who had long dealt with cupidity. For a novelty, his calculation failed. The face of Dr. Etherington flushed, then paled, and finally settled into a look of melancholy reprehension. He arose and paced the room for several minutes in silence; during which time his companion believed he was debating with himself on the chances of obtaining a higher bid for his consent, when he suddenly stopped and addressed my ancestor in a mild but steady tone.

"I feel it to be a duty, Mr. Goldencalf," he said, "to admonish you of the precipice over which you hang. The love of money, which is the root of all evil, which caused Judas to betray even his Saviour and God, has taken deep root in your soul. You are no longer young, and although still proud in your strength and prosperity, are much nearer to your great account than you may be willing to believe. It is not an hour since you witnessed the departure of a penitent soul for the presence of her God; since you heard the dying request from her lips; and since, in such a presence, and in such a scene, you gave a pledge to respect her wishes, and, now with the accursed spirit of gain uppermost, you would trifle with these most sacred obligations, in order to keep a little worthless gold in a hand that is already full to overflowing. Fancy that the pure spirit of thy confiding and single-minded wife were present at this conversation; fancy it mourning over thy weakness and violated faith—nay, I know not that such is not the fact; for there is no reason to believe that the happy spirits are not permitted to watch near and mourn over us, until we are released from this mass of sin and depravity in which we dwell—and, then, reflect what must be her sorrow at hearing how soon her parting request is forgotten, how useless has been the example of her holy end, how rooted and fearful are thine own infirmities!"

My father was more rebuked by the manner than by the words of the divine. He passed his hand across his brow, as if to shut out the view of his wife's spirit; turned, drew his writing materials nearer, wrote a check for the ten thousand pounds, and handed it to the doctor with the subdued air of a corrected boy.

"Jack shall be at your disposal, good sir," he said, as the paper was delivered, "whenever it may be your pleasure to send for him."

They parted in silence; the divine too much displeased, and my ancestor too much grieved, to indulge in words of ceremony.

When my father found himself alone, he gazed furtively about the room, to assure himself that the rebuking spirit of his wife had not taken a shape less questionable than air, and then he mused for at least an hour, very painfully, on all the principal occurrences of the night. It is said that occupation is a certain

solace for grief, and so it proved to be in the present case; for luckily my father had made up that very day his private account of the sum total of his fortune. Sitting down, therefore, to the agreeable task, he went through the simple process of subtracting from it the amount for which he had just drawn, and, finding that he was still master of seven hundred and eighty-two thousand three hundred and eleven pounds odd shillings and even pence, he found a very natural consolation for the magnitude of the sum he had just given away, by comparing it with the magnitude of that which was left.

CHAPTER III.

OPINIONS OF OUR AUTHOR'S ANCESTOR, TOGETHER WITH SOME OF HIS OWN, AND SOME OF OTHER PEOPLE'S.

DR. ETHERINGTON was both a pious man and a gentleman. The second son of a baronet of ancient lineage, he had been educated in most of the opinions of his caste, and possibly he was not entirely above its prejudices; but, this much admitted, few divines were more willing to defer to the ethics and principles of the Bible than himself. His humility had, of course, a decent regard to station; his charity was judiciously regulated by the articles of faith; and his philanthropy was of the discriminating character that became a warm supporter of Church and State.

In accepting the trust which he was now obliged to assume, he had yielded purely to a benevolent wish to smooth the dying pillow of my mother. Acquainted with the character of her husband, he had committed a sort of pious fraud, in attaching the condition of the endowment to his consent; for, notwithstanding the becoming language of his own rebuke, the promise, and all the other little attendant circumstances of the night, it might be questioned which felt the most surprise after the draft was presented and duly honored, he who found himself in possession, or he who found himself deprived, of the sum of ten thousand pounds sterling. Still Dr. Etherington acted with the most scrupulous integrity in the whole affair; and although I am aware that a writer who has so many wonders to relate, as must of necessity adorn the succeeding pages of this manuscript, should observe a guarded discretion in drawing on the credulity of his readers, truth compels me to add that every farthing of the money was duly invested with a single eye to the wishes of the dying Christian, who, under Providence, had been the means of bestowing so much gold on the poor and unlettered. As to the manner in which the charity was finally improved, I shall say nothing, since no inquiry on my part has ever enabled me to obtain such information as would justify my speaking with authority.

As for myself, I shall have little more to add touching the events of the succeeding twenty years. I was baptized, nursed, breeched, schooled, horsed, confirmed, sent to the university, and graduated, much as befalls all gentlemen of the Established Church in the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, or, in other words, of the land of my ancestor. During these pregnant years, Dr. Etherington acquitted himself of a duty that, judging by a very predominant feeling of human nature (which, singularly enough, renders us uniformly averse to being troubled with other people's affairs), I think he must have found sufficiently vexatious, quite as well as my good mother had any right to expect. Most of my vacations were spent at his rectory; for he had first married, then become a father, next a widower, and had exchanged his town-living for one in the country, between the periods of my mother's death and that of my going to Eton; and, after I quitted Oxford, much more of time was passed beneath his friendly roof than beneath that of my own parent. Indeed, I saw little of the latter. He paid my bills, furnished me with pocket-money, and professed an intention to let me travel after I should reach my majority. But, satisfied with these proofs of paternal care, he appeared willing to let me pursue my own course very much in my own way.

My ancestor was an eloquent example of the truth of that political dogma which teaches the efficacy of the division of labor. No manufacturer of the head of a pin ever attained greater dexterity in his single-minded vocation than was reached by my father in the one pursuit to which he devoted, so far as human ken could reach, both soul and body. As any sense is known to increase in acuteness by constant exercise, or any passion by indulgence, so did his ardor in favor of the great object of his affections grow with its growth, and become more manifest as an ordinary observer would be apt to think the motive of its existence at all had nearly ceased. This is a moral phenomenon that I have often had occasion to observe, and which, there is some reason to think, depends on a principle of attraction that has hitherto escaped the sagacity of the philosophers, but which is as active in the immaterial, as is that of gravitation in the material world. Talents like his, so incessantly and unweariedly employed, produced the usual fruits. He grew richer hourly, and at the time of which I speak he was pretty generally known to the initiated to be the warmest man who had anything to do with the Stock Exchange.

I do not think that the opinions of my ancestor underwent as many material changes between the ages of fifty and seventy as they had undergone between the ages of ten and forty. During the latter period the tree of life usually gets deep root, its inclination is fixed, whether obtained by bending to the storms, or by drawing toward the light; and it probably yields more in fruits of its own than it gains by tillage and manuring. Still my ancestor was not exactly the same man the day he kept his seventieth birthday as he had been the day he kept his fiftieth. In the first place, he was worth thrice the money at the former period that he had been worth at the latter. Of course his moral system had undergone all the mutations that are known to be dependent on a change of this important character. Beyond a question, during the last five-and-twenty years of the life of my ancestor, his political bias, too, was in favor of exclusive privileges and exclusive benefits. I do not mean that he was an aristocrat in the vulgar acceptation. To him, feudality was a blank; he had probably never heard the word. Portcullises rose and fell, flanking towers lifted their heads, and embattled walls swept around their fabrics in vain, so far as his imagination was concerned. He cared not for the days of courts leet and courts baron; nor for the barons themselves; nor for the honors of a pedigree (why should he?—no prince in the land could more clearly trace his family into obscurity than himself), nor for the vanities of a court, nor for those of society; nor for aught else of the same nature that is apt to have charms for the weak-minded, the imaginative, or the conceited. His political prepossessions showed themselves in a very different manner. Throughout the whole of the five lustres I have named, he was never heard to whisper a censure against government, let its measures, or the character of its administration, be what it would. It was enough for him that it was government. Even taxation no longer excited his ire, nor aroused his eloquence. He conceived it to be necessary to order, and especially to the protection of property, a branch of political science that he had so studied as to succeed in protecting his own estate, in a measure, against even this great ally itself.

After he became worth a million, it was observed that all his opinions grew less favorable to mankind in general, and that he was much disposed to exaggerate the amount and quality of the few boons which Providence has bestowed on the poor. The report of a meeting of the whigs generally had an effect on his appetite; a resolution that was suspected of emanating from Brooks's commonly robbed him of a dinner, and the radicals never seriously moved that he did not spend a sleepless night, and pass a large portion of the next day in uttering words that it would be hardly moral to repeat. I may, without impropriety, add, however, that on such occasions he did not spare allusions to the gallows; Sir Francis Burdett, in particular, was a target for a good deal

of billingsgate; and men as upright and as respectable even as my Lords Grey, Lansdowne, and Holland, were treated as if they were no better than they should be. But on these little details it is unnecessary to dwell, for it must be a subject of common remark, that the more elevated and refined men become in their political ethics, the more they are accustomed to throw dirt upon their neighbors. I will just state, however, that most of what I have here related has been transmitted to me by direct oral traditions, for I seldom saw my ancestor, and when we did meet, it was only to settle accounts, to eat a leg of mutton together, and to part like those who, at least, have never quarreled.

Not so with Dr. Etherington. Habit (to say nothing of my own merits) had attached him to one who owed so much to his care, and his doors were always as open to me as if I had been his own son.

It has been said that most of my idle time (omitting the part misspent in the schools) was passed at the Rectory.

The excellent divine had married a lovely woman a year or two after the death of my mother, who had left him a widower, and the father of a little image of herself, before the expiration of a twelvemonth. Owing to the strength of his affections for the deceased, or for his daughter, or because he could not please himself in a second marriage as well as it had been his good fortune to do in the first, Dr. Etherington had never spoken of forming another connection. He appeared content to discharge his duties, as a Christian and a gentleman, without increasing them by creating any new relations with society.

Anna Etherington was of course my constant companion during many long and delightful visits at the Rectory. Three years my junior, the friendship on my part had commenced by a hundred acts of boyish kindness. Between the ages of seven and twelve, I dragged her about in a garden-chair, pushed her on the swing, and wiped her eyes and uttered words of friendly consolation when any transient cloud obscured the sunny brightness of her childhood. From twelve to fourteen, I told her stories; astonished her with narratives of my own exploits at Eton, and caused her serene blue eyes to open in admiration at the marvels of London. At fourteen, I began to pick up her pocket-handkerchief, hunt for her thimble, accompany her in duets, and to read poetry to her, as she occupied herself with the little lady-like employments of the needle.

About the age of seventeen I began to compare cousin Anna, as I was permitted to call her, with the other young girls of my acquaintaince, and the comparison was generally much in her favor. It was also about this time that, as my admiration grew more warm and manifest, she became less confiding and less frank; I perceived too that, for a novelty, she now had some secrets that she did not choose to communicate to me, that she was more with her governess, and less in my society than formerly, and one occasion, (bitterly did I feel the slight) she actually recounted to her father the amusing incidents of a little birthday fete at which she had been present, and which was given by a gentleman of the vicinity, before she even dropped a hint to me, touching the delight she had experienced on the occasion! I was, however, a good deal compensated for the slight by her saying, kindly, as she ended her playful and humorous account of the affair:

"It would have made you laugh heartily, Jack, to see the droll manner in which the servants acted their parts;" (there had been a sort of mystified mask) "more particularly the fat old butler, of whom they had made a Cupid, as Dick Griffin said, in order to show that love becomes drowsy and dull by good eating and drinking—I *do* wish you *could* have been there, Jack."

Anna was a gentle, feminine girl, with a most lovely and winning countenance, and I did inherently like to hear her pronounce the word "Jack"—it was so different from the boisterous screech of the Eton boys, or the swaggering call of my boon companions at Oxford!

"I should have liked it excessively myself, Anna," I answered; "more particu-

larly as you seem to have so much enjoyed the fun."

"Yes, but that *could not be*," interrupted Miss-Mrs. Norton, the governess. "For Sir Harry Griffin is very difficult about his associates, and you know, my dear, that Mr. Goldencalf, though a very respectable young man himself, could not expect one of the oldest baronets of the country to go out of his way to invite the son of a stock-jobber to be present at a fete given to his own heir."

Luckily for Miss-Mrs. Norton, Dr. Etherington had walked away the moment his daughter ended her recital, or she might have met with a disagreeable commentary on her notions concerning the fitness of associations. Anna herself looked earnestly at her governess, and I saw a flush mantle over her sweet face that reminded me of the ruddiness of morn. Her soft eyes then fell to the floor, and it was some time before she spoke.

The next day I was arranging some fishing-tackle under a window of the library, where my person was concealed by the shrubbery, when I heard the melodious voice of Anna wishing the rector good morning. My heart beat quicker as she approached the casement, tenderly inquiring of her parent how he had passed the night. The answers were as affectionate as the questions, and then there was a little pause.

"What is a stock-jobber, father?" suddenly resumed Anna, whom I heard rustling the leaves above my head.

"A stock-jobber, my dear, is one who buys and sells in the public funds, with a view to profit."

"And is it thought a *particularly* disgraceful employment?"

"Why, that depends on circumstances. On 'Change it seems to be well enough—among merchants and bankers there is some odium attached to it, I believe."

"And can you say *why*, father?"

"I believe," said Dr. Etherington, laughing, "for no other reason than that it is an *uncertain* calling—one that is liable to sudden reverses—what is termed gambling — and whatever renders property insecure is sure to obtain odium among those whose principal concern is its accumulation; those who consider the responsibility of others of essential importance to themselves."

"But is it a dishonest pursuit, father?"

"As the times go, not necessarily, my dear; though it may readily become so."

"And is it disreputable, generally, with the world?"

"That depends on circumstances, Anna. When the stock-jobber loses, he is very apt to be condemned; but I rather think his character rises in proportion to his gains. But why do you ask these singular questions, love?"

I thought I heard Anna breathe harder than usual, and it is certain that she leaned far out of the window to pluck a rose.

"Why, Mrs. Norton said Jack was not invited to Sir Harry Griffin's because his father was a stock-jobber. Do you think she was right, sir?"

"Very likely, my dear," returned the divine, who I fancied was smiling at the question. "Sir Harry has the advantage of birth, and he probably did not forget that our friend Jack was not so fortunate —and, moreover, Sir Harry, while he values himself on his wealth, is not as rich as Jack's father by a million or two —in other words, as they say on 'Change, Jack's father could buy ten of him. This motive was perhaps more likely to influence him than the first. In addition, Sir Harry is suspected of gambling himself in the funds through the aid of agents; and a gentleman who resorts to such means to increase his fortune is a little apt to exaggerate his social advantages by way of a set-off to the humiliation."

"And *gentlemen* do really become stock-jobbers, father?"

"Anna, the world has undergone great changes in my time. Ancient opinions have been shaken, and governments themselves are getting to be little better than political establishments to add facilities to the accumulation of money. This is a subject, however, you cannot very well understand, nor do I pretend to be very profound in it myself."

"But is Jack's father really so very, very rich?" asked Anna, whose thoughts had been wandering from the thread of those pursued by her father.

"He is believed to be so."

"And Jack is his heir."

"Certainly—he has no other child; though it is not easy to say what so singular a being may do with his money."

"I hope he will disinherit Jack!"

"You surprise me, Anna! You who are so mild and reasonable, to wish such a misfortune to befall our young friend, John Goldencalf."

I gazed up in astonishment at this extraordinary speech of Anna, and at the moment I would have given all my interest in the fortune in question to have seen her face (most of her body was out of the window, for I heard her again rustling the bush above my head), in order to judge of her motive by its expression; but an envious rose grew exactly in the only spot where it was possible to get a glimpse.

"Why do you wish so cruel a thing?" resumed Dr. Etherington, a little earnestly.

"Because I hate stock-jobbing and its riches, father. Were Jack poorer, it seems to me he would be better esteemed."

As this was uttered the dear girl drew back, and then I perceived I had mistaken her cheek for one of the largest and most blooming of the flowers. Dr. Etherington laughed, and I distinctly heard him kiss the blushing face of his daughter. I think I would have given up my hopes in another million to have been the rector at Tenthpig at that instant.

"If that be all, child," he answered, "set thy heart at rest. Jack's money will never bring him into contempt unless through the use he may make of it. Alas! Anna, we live in an age of corruption and cupidity! Generous motives appear to be lost sight of in the general desire of gain; and he who would manifest a disposition to a pure and disinterested philanthropy is either distrusted as a hypocrite or derided as a fool. The accursed revolution among our neighbors, the French, has quite unsettled opinions, and religion itself has tottered in the wild anarchy of theories to which it has given rise. There is no worldly advantage that has been more austerely denounced by the divine writers than riches, and yet it is fast rising to be the God of the ascendant. To say nothing of an hereafter, society is getting to be corrupted by it to the core, and even respect for birth is yielding to the mercenary feeling."

"And do you think pride of birth, father, a mistaken prejudice as well as pride of riches?"

"Pride of any sort, my love, cannot exactly be defended on evangelical principles; but surely some distinctions among men are necessary, even for quiet. Were the leveling principles acknowledged, the lettered and the accomplished must descend to an equality with the ignorant and vulgar, since all men cannot rise to the attainments of the former class, and the world would retrograde to barbarism. The character of a Christian gentleman is much too precious to trifle with in order to carry out an impracticable theory."

Anna was silent. Probably she was confused between the opinions which she most liked to cherish and the faint glimmerings of truth to which we are reduced by the ordinary relations of life. As for the good rector himself, I had no difficulty in understanding his bias, though neither his premises nor his conclusions possessed the logical clearness that used to render his sermons so delightful, more especially when he preached about the higher qualities of the Saviour's dispensation, such as charity, love of our fellows, and in particular, the imperative duty of humbling ourselves before God.

A month after this accidental dialogue, chance made me auditor of what passed between my ancestor and Sir Joseph Job, another celebrated dealer in the funds, in an interview that took place in the house of the former in Cheapside. As the difference was so *patent*, as the French express it, I shall furnish the substance of what passed.

"This is a serious and a most alarming movement, Mr. Goldencalf," observed Sir

Joseph, " and calls for union and cordiality among the holders of property. Should these damnable opinions get fairly abroad among the people what would become of us? I ask, Mr. Goldencalf, what would become of us? "

"I agree with you, Sir Joseph, it is very alarming—frightfully alarming! "

"We shall have agrarian laws, sir. Your money, sir, and mine—our hard earnings—will become the prey of political robbers, and our children will be begging to satisfy the envious longings of some pitiful scoundrel without a sixpence! "

" 'Tis a sad state of things, Sir Joseph; and government is very culpable that it don't raise at least ten new regiments."

"The worst of it is, good Mr. Goldencalf, that there are some jackanapeses of the aristocracy who lead the rascals on and lend them the sanction of their names. It is a mistake, sir, that we give so much importance to birth in this island, by which means proud beggars set unwashed blackguards in motion, and the substantial subjects are the sufferers. Property, sir, is in danger, and property is the only true basis of society."

"I am sure, Sir Joseph, I never could see the smallest use in birth."

"It is of no use but to beget pensioners, Mr. Goldencalf. Now with property it is a different thing—money is the parent of money, and by money a State becomes powerful and prosperous. But this accursed revolution among our neighbors, the French, has quite unsettled opinions, and, alas! property is in perpetual danger! "

"Sorry am I to say, I feel it to be so in every nerve of my body, Sir Joseph."

" We must unite and defend ourselves, Mr. Goldencalf, else both you and I, men warm enough and substantial enough at present, will be in the ditch. Do you not see that we are in actual danger of a division of property? "

" God forbid! "

"Yes, sir, our sacred property is in danger! "

Here Sir Joseph shook my father cordially by the hand and withdrew. I find, by a memorandum among the papers of my deceased ancestor, that he paid the broker of Sir Joseph, that day month, sixty-two thousand seven hundred and twelve pounds difference (as bull and bears), owing to the fact of the knight having got some secret information through a clerk in one of the offices; an advantage that enabled him in this instance, at least, to make a better bargain than one who was generally allowed to be among the shrewdest speculators on 'Change.

My mind was of a nature to be considerably exercised (as the pious purists express it), by becoming the depository of sentiments so diametrically opposed to each other as those of Dr. Etherington and those of Sir Joseph Job. On the one side, I was taught the degradation of birth; on the other, the dangers of property. Anna was usually my confidante, but on this subject I was tongue-tied, for I dared not confess that I had overheard the discourse with her father, and I was compelled to digest the contradictory doctrines by myself in the best manner I could.

CHAPTER IV.

SHOWING THE UPS AND DOWNS, THE HOPES AND FEARS, AND THE VAGARIES OF LOVE, SOME VIEWS OF DEATH, AND AN ACCOUNT OF AN INHERITANCE.

FROM my twentieth to my twenty-third year no event occurred of any great moment. The day I became of age my father settled on me a regular allowance of a thousand a year, and I make no doubt I should have spent my time much as other young men, had it not been for the peculiarity of my birth, which I now began to see was wanting in a few of the requisites to carry me successfully through a struggle for place with a certain portion of what is called the great world. While most anxious to trace themselves into obscurity, there was a singular reluctance to effecting the object as clearly and as distinctly as it was in my power to do. From all which, as well as from much other

testimony, I have been led to infer that the doses of mystification which appear to be necessary to the happiness of the human race require to be mixed with an experienced and a delicate hand. Our organs, both physically and morally, are so fearfully constituted that they require to be protected from realities. As the physical eye has need of clouded glass to look steadily at the sun, so it would seem the mind's eye has also need of something smoky to look steadily at truth.

But, while I avoided laying open the secret of my heart to Anna, I sought various opportunities to converse with Dr. Etherington and my father on those points which gave me the most concern. From the first, I heard principles which went to show that society was of necessity divided into orders; that it was not only impolitic but wicked to weaken the barriers by which they were separated; that heaven had its seraphs and cherubs, its archangels and angels, its saints and its merely happy, and that, by obvious induction, this world ought to have its kings, lords, and commons. The usual winding-up of all the doctor's essays was a lamentation on the confusion in classes that was visiting England as a judgment. My ancestor, on the other hand, cared little for social classification, or for any other conservatory expedient but force. On this topic he would talk all day, regiments and bayonets glittering in every sentence. When most eloquent on this theme he would cry (like Mr. Manners Sutton), "ORDER —order!" nor can I recall a single disquisition that did not end with, "Alas, Jack, property is in danger!"

I shall not say that my mind entirely escaped confusion among these conflicting opinions, although I luckily got a glimpse of one important truth, for both the commentators cordially agreed in fearing, and, of necessity, in hating the mass of their fellow creatures. My own natural disposition was inclining to philanthropy, and as I was unwilling to admit the truth of theories that arrayed me in open hostility against so large a portion of mankind, I soon determined to set up one of my own, which, while it avoided the faults, should include the excellences of both the others. It was, of course, no great affair merely to form such a resolution; but I shall have occasion to say a word hereafter on the manner in which I attempted to carry it out in practice.

Time moved on, and Anna became each day more beautiful. I thought that she had lost some of her frankness and girlish gayety, it is true, after the dialogue with her father; but this I attributed to the reserve and discretion that became the expanding reason and greater feeling of propriety that adorn young womanhood. With me she was always ingenuous and simple, and were I to live a thousand years the angelic serenity of countenance with which she invariably listened to the theories of my busy brain would not be erased from recollection.

We were talking of these things one morning quite alone. Anna heard me when I was most sedate with manifest pleasure, and she smiled mournfully when the thread of my argument was entangled by a vagary of the imagination. I felt at my heart's core what a blessing such a mentor would be, and how fortunate would be my lot could I succeed in securing her for life. Still I did not, could not, summon courage to lay bare my inmost thoughts, and to beg a boon that in these moments of transient humility I feared I never should be worthy to possess.

"I have even thought of marrying," I continued—so occupied with my own theories as not to weigh, with the accuracy that becomes the frankness and superior advantages which man possesses over the gentler sex, the full import of my words —"could I find one, Anna, as gentle, as good, as beautiful, and as wise as yourself who would consent to be mine I should not wait a minute; but, unhappily, I fear this is not likely to be my blessed lot. I am not the grandson of a baronet, and your father expects to unite you with one who can at least show that the 'bloody hand' has once been borne on his shield; and, on the other side, my father talks of nothing but millions." During the first

part of this speech the amiable girl looked kindly up at me, and with a seeming desire to soothe me; but at its close her eyes dropped upon her work and she remained silent. "Your father says that every man who has an interest in the State should give it pledges"—here Anna smiled, but so covertly that her sweet mouth scarce betrayed the impulse—"and that none others can ever control it to advantage. I have thought of asking my father to buy a borough and a baronetcy, for with the first, and the influence that his money gives, he need not long wish for the last; but I never open my lips on any matter of the sort that he does not answer, 'Fol lol der rol, Jack, with your knighthoods, and social order, and bishoprics, and boroughs—property is in danger!—loans and regiments, if thou wilt—give us more order—"ORDER—order"—bayonets are what we want, boy, and good wholesome taxes, to accustom the nation to contribute to its own wants and to maintain its credit. Why, youngster, if the interest on the debt were to remain unpaid twenty-four hours, your body corporate, as you call it, would die a natural death; and what would then become of your knights-barro-knights?—and barren enough some of them are getting to be by their wastefulness and extravagance. Get thee married, Jack, and settle prudently. There is neighbor Silverpenny has an only daughter of a suitable age; and a good hussy is she in the bargain. The only daughter of Oliver Silverpenny will be a suitable wife for the only son of Thomas Goldencalf; though I give thee notice, boy, that thou wilt be cut off with a competency, so keep thy head clear of extravagant castle-building, learn economy in season, and, above all, make no debts.'" Anna laughed as I humorously imitated the well-known intonation of Mr. Speaker Sutton, but a cloud darkened her bright features when I concluded.

"Yesterday I mentioned the subject to your father," I resumed, "and he thought with me that the idea of the borough and the baronetcy was a good one. 'You would be the *second* of your line, Jack,' he said, 'and that is always better than being the first; for there is no security for a man's being a good member of society like that of his having presented to his eyes the examples of those who have gone before him, and who have been distinguished by their services or their virtues. If your father would consent to come into Parliament and sustain government at this critical moment, his origin would be overlooked, and you would have pride in looking back on his acts. As it is, I fear his whole soul is occupied with the unworthy and debasing passion of mere gain. Money is a necessary auxiliary to rank, and without rank there can be no order, and without order no liberty; but when the love of money gets to occupy the place of respect for descent and past actions, a community loses the very sentiment on which all its noble exploits are bottomed.' So you see, dear Anna, that our parents hold very different opinions on a very grave question, and between natural affection and acquired veneration I scarcely know which to receive. If I could find one sweet, and wise, and beautiful as thou, and who could pity me, I would marry to-morrow, and cast all the future on the happiness that is to be found with such a companion."

As usual, Anna heard me in silence. That she did not, however, view matrimony with exactly the same eyes as myself was clearly proved the very next day, for young Sir Harry Griffin (the father was dead) offered in form and was very decidedly refused.

Although I was always happy at the Rectory, I could not help feeling rather than seeing that, as the French express it, I occupied a false position in society. Known to be the expectant of great wealth, it was not easy to be overlooked altogether in a country whose government is based on a representation of property, and in which boroughs are openly in market; and yet they who had obtained the accidental advantage of having their fortunes made by their grandfathers were constantly convincing me that mine, vast as it was thought to be, was made by my father. Ten thousand times

did I wish (as it has since been expressed by the great captain of the age), that I had been my own grandson; for, notwithstanding the probability that he who is nearest to the founder of a fortune is the most likely to share the largest in its accumulations, as he who is nearest in descent to the progenitor who has illustrated his race is the most likely to feel the influence of his character, I was not long in perceiving that in highly refined and intellectual communities the public sentiment, as it is connected with the respect and influence that are the meed of both, directly refutes the inferences of all reasonable conjectures on the subject. I was out of my place, uneasy, ashamed, proud, and resentful; in short, I occupied a *false position,* and unluckily one from which I saw no plausible retreat except by falling back on Lombard Street, or by cutting my throat. Anna alone—kind, gentle, serene-eyed Anna—entered into all my joys, sympathized in my mortifications, and appeared to view me as I was; neither dazzled by my wealth nor repelled by my origin.

The day she refused young Sir Harry Griffin I could have kneeled at her feet and called her blessed! It is said that no moral disease is ever benefited by its study. I was a living proof of the truth of the opinion that brooding over one's wrongs or infirmities seldom does much more than aggravate the evil. I greatly fear it is in the nature of man to depreciate the advantages he actually enjoys and to exaggerate those which are denied him. Fifty times during the six months that succeeded the repulse of the young baronet did I resolve to take heart and to throw myself at the feet of Anna, and as often was I deterred by the apprehension that I had nothing to render me worthy of one so excellent, and especially of one who was the granddaughter of the seventh English baronet. I do not pretend to explain the connection between cause and effect, for I am neither physician nor metaphysician; but the tumult of spirits that resulted from so many doubts, hopes, fears, resolutions, and breakings of resolutions, began to affect my health, and I was just about to yield to the advice of my friends (among whom Anna was the most earnest and the most sorrowful), to travel, when an unexpected call to attend the death-bed of my ancestor was received. I tore myself from the Rectory and hurried up to town with the diligence and assiduity of an only son and heir summoned on an occasion so solemn.

I found my ancestor still in the possession of his senses, though given over by the physicians; a circumstance that proved a degree of disinterestedness and singleness of purpose on their part that was scarcely to be expected toward a patient who it was commonly believed was worth more than a million. My reception by the servants and by the two or three friends who had assembled on this melancholy occasion, too, was sympathizing, warm, and of a character to show their solicitude and forethought.

My reception by the sick man was less marked. The total abstraction of his faculties in the one great pursuit of his life; a certain sternness of purpose which is apt to get the ascendant with those who are resolute to gain, and which usually communicates itself to the manners; and an absence of those kinder ties that are developed by the exercise of the more familiar charities of our existence, had opened a breach between us that was not to be filled by the simple, unaided fact of natural affinity. I say of natural affinity, for, notwithstanding the doubts that cast their shadows on that branch of my genealogical tree by which I was connected with my maternal grandfather, the title of the king to his crown is not more apparent than was my direct lineal descent from my father. I always believed him to be my ancestor *de jure* as well as *de facto,* and could fain have loved him and honored him as such had my natural yearnings been met with more lively bowels of sympathy on his side.

Notwithstanding the long and unnatural estrangement that had thus existed between the father and son, the meeting on the present occasion was not entirely without some manifestations of feeling.

"Thou art come at last, Jack," said

my ancestor. "I was afraid, boy, thou might'st be too late."

The difficult breathing, haggard countenance, and broken utterance of my father struck me with awe. This was the first death-bed by which I had ever stood; and the admonishing picture of time passing into eternity was indelibly stamped on my memory. It was not only a death-bed scene, but it was a family death-bed scene. I know not how it was, but I thought my ancestor looked more like the Goldencalfs than I had ever seen him look before.

"Thou hast come at last, Jack," he repeated, "and I'm glad of it. Thou art the only being in whom I have now any concern. It might have been better, perhaps, had I lived more with my kind—but thou wilt be the gainer. Ah! Jack, we are but miserable mortals after all! To be called away so suddenly and so young!"

My ancestor had seen his seventy-fifth birthday; but, unhappily, he had not settled all his accounts with the world, although he had given the physician his last fee and sent the parson away with a donation to the poor of the parish that would make even a beggar merry for a whole life.

"Thou art come at last, Jack! Well, my loss will be thy gain, boy! Send the nurse from the room."

I did as commanded, and we were left to ourselves.

"Take this key," handing me one from beneath his pillow, "and open the upper drawer of my secretary. Bring me the packet which is addressed to thyself."

I silently obeyed; when my ancestor, first gazing at it with a sadness that I cannot well describe—for it was neither worldly nor quite of an ethereal character, but a singular and fearful compound of both—put the papers into my hand, relinquishing his hold slowly and with reluctance.

"Thou wilt wait till I am out of thy sight, Jack?"

A tear burst from out its source and fell upon the emaciated hand of my father. He looked at me wistfully, and I felt a slight pressure that denoted affection.

"It might have been better, Jack, had we known more of each other. But Providence made me fatherless, and I have lived childless by my own folly. Thy mother was a saint, I believe; but I fear I learned it too late. Well, a blessing often comes at the eleventh hour!"

As my ancestor now manifested a desire not to be disturbed, I called the nurses and quitted the room, retiring to my own modest chamber, where the packet, a large bundle of papers sealed and directed to myself in the hand-writing of the dying man, was carefully secured under a good lock. I did not meet my father again but once under circumstances which admitted of intelligible communion. From the time of our first interview he gradually grew worse, his reason tottered, and, like the sinful cardinal of Shakespeare, "he died and gave no sign."

Three days after my arrival, however, I was left alone with him, and he suddenly revived from a state approaching to stupor. It was the only time since the first interview in which he had seemed even to know me.

"Thou art come at last," he said, in a tone that was already sepulchral. "Canst tell me, boy, why they had golden rods to measure the city?" His nurse had been reading to him a chapter of the Revelation which had been selected by himself. "Thou seest, lad, the wall itself was of jasper and the city was of pure gold—I shall not need money in my new habitation—ha! it will not be wanted there! I am not crazed, Jack—would I had loved gold less and my kind more. The city itself is of pure gold and the walls of jasper—precious abode!—ha! Jack, thou hearest, boy—I am happy—too happy, Jack!—gold—gold!"

The final words were uttered with a shout. They were the last that ever came from the lips of Thomas Goldencalf. The noise brought in the attendants, who found him dead. I ordered the room to be cleared as soon as the melancholy truth was fairly established, and remained several minutes alone with the body. The countenance was set in death. The eyes, still open, had that revolting glare of

frenzied delight with which the spirit had departed, and the whole face presented the dread picture of a hopeless end. I knelt and, though a Protestant, prayed fervently for the soul of the deceased. I then took my leave of the first and the last of all my ancestors.

To this scene succeeded the usual period of outward sorrow, the interment, and the betrayal of the expectations of the survivors. I observed that the house was much frequented by many who rarely or never had crossed its threshold during the life of its late owner. There was much cornering, much talking in an undertone, and looking at me that I did not understand, and gradually the number of regular visitors increased until it amounted to about twenty. Among them were the parson of the parish, the trustees of several notorious charities, three attorneys, four or five well-known dealers of the Stock Exchange, foremost of whom was Sir Joseph Job, and three of the professionally benevolent, or of those whose sole occupation appears to be that of quickening the latent charities of their neighbors.

The day after my ancestor was finally removed from our sight the house was more than usually crowded. The secret conference increased both in earnestness and in frequency, and finally I was summoned to meet these ill-timed guests in the room which had been the sanctum sanctorum of the late owner of the dwelling. As I entered among twenty strange faces, wondering why I, who had hitherto passed through life so little heeded, should be unseasonably importuned, Sir Joseph Job presented himself as the spokesman of the party.

"We have sent for you, Mr. Goldencalf," the knight commenced, decently wiping his eyes, "because we think that respect for our late much-esteemed, most excellent, and very respectable friend requires that we no longer neglect his final pleasure, but that we should proceed at once to open his will, in order that we may take prompt measures for its execution. It would have been more regular had we done this before he was interred, for we cannot have foreseen his pleasure concerning his venerable remains; but it is fully my determination to have everything done as he has ordered, even though we may be compelled to disinter the body."

I am habitually quiescent, and possibly credulous, but nature has not denied me a proper spirit. What Sir Joseph Job, or any one but myself, had to do with the will of my ancestor did not strike me at first sight; and I took care to express as much, in terms it was not easy to misunderstand.

"The only child, and, indeed, the only known relative of the deceased," I said, "I do not well see, gentlemen, how this subject should interest in this lively manner so many strangers!"

"Very spirited and proper, no doubt, sir," returned Sir Joseph, smiling; "but you ought to know, young gentleman, that if there are such things as heirs, there are also such things as executors!"

This I did know already, and I had also somewhere imbibed an opinion that the latter was commonly the most lucrative situation.

"Have you any reason to suppose, Sir Joseph Job, that my late father has selected you to fulfill this trust?"

"That will be better known in the end, young gentleman. Your late father is known to have died rich, very rich—not that he has left as much by half a million as vulgar report will have it—but what I should term comfortably off; and it is unreasonable to suppose that a man of his great caution and prudence should suffer his money to go to the heir-at-law, that heir being a youth only in his twenty-third year, ignorant in business, not overgifted with experience, and having the propensities of all his years in this ill-behaving and extravagant age, without certain trusts and provisions which will leave his hard earnings for some time to come under the care of men who, like himself, know the full value of money."

"No, never!—'tis quite impossible—'tis more than impossible!" exclaimed the bystanders, all shaking their heads.

"And the late Mr. Goldencalf, too, intimate with most of the substantial names on 'Change, and particularly with Sir Joseph Job!" added another.

Sir Joseph Job nodded his head, smiled, stroked his chin, and stood waiting for my reply.

"Property is in danger, Sir Joseph," I said, ironically; "but it matters not. If there is a will it is as much my interest to know it as it can possibly be yours; and I am quite willing that a search be made on the spot."

Sir Joseph looked daggers at me; but being a man of business he took me at my word, and, receiving the keys I offered, a proper person was immediately set to work to open the drawers. The search was continued for four hours without success. Every private drawer was rummaged, every paper opened, and many a curious glance was cast at the contents of the latter, in order to get some clew to the probable amount of the assets of the deceased. Consternation and uneasiness very evidently increased among most of the spectators as the fruitless examination proceeded; and when the notary ended, declaring that no will was to be found, nor any evidence of credits, every eye was fastened on me, as if I were suspected of stealing that which in order of nature was likely to be my own without the necessity of crime.

"There must be a secret repository of papers somewhere," said Sir Joseph Job, as if he suspected more than he wished just then to express. "Mr. Goldencalf is largely a creditor on the public books, and yet here is not so much as a scrip for a pound!"

I left the room and soon returned, bringing with me the bundle that had been committed to me by my father.

"Here, gentlemen," I said, "is a large packet of papers that was given to me by the deceased on his death-bed with his own hand. It is, as you see, sealed with his seal, and especially addressed to me in his own handwriting, and it is not violent to suppose that the contents concern me only. Still, as you take so great an interest in the affairs of the deceased, it shall now be opened, and those contents, so far as you can have any right to know them, shall not be hid from you."

I thought Sir Joseph looked grave when he saw the packet and had examined the handwriting of the envelope. All, however, expressed their satisfaction that the search was now most probably ended. I broke the seals and exposed the contents of the envelope. Within it there were several smaller packets, each sealed with the seal of the deceased, and each addressed to me in his own handwriting, like the external covering. Each of these smaller packets, too, had a seperate indorsement of its contents. Taking them as they lay I read aloud the nature of each before I proceeded to the next. They were also numbered.

"No. 1," I commenced. "Certificates of public stock held by Tho. Goldencalf, June 12th, 1815." We were now at June 29th of the same year. As I laid aside this packet I observed that the sum indorsed on its back greatly exceeded a million. "No. 2. Certificates of Bank of England stock." This sum was several hundred thousands of pounds. "No. 3. South Sea Annuities." Nearly three hundred thousand pounds. "No. 4. Bonds and mortgages." Four hundred and thirty thousand pounds. "No. 5. The bond of Sir Joseph Job for sixty-three thonsand pounds."

I laid down the paper and involuntarily exclaimed, "Property is in danger!" Sir Joseph turned pale, but he beckoned to me to proceed, saying, "We shall soon come to the will, sir."

"No. 6—" I hesitated; for it was an assignment to myself, which, from its very nature, I perceived was an abortive attempt to escape the payment of the legacy duty.

"Well, sir, No. 6?" inquired Sir Joseph, with tremulous exultation.

"Is an instrument affecting myself, and with which you have no concern, sir."

"We shall see, sir, we shall see, sir—if you refuse to exhibit the paper there are laws to compel you."

"To do what, Sir Joseph Job? To exhibit to my father's debtors papers that are exclusively addressed to me and which can affect me only? But here is the paper, gentlemen, that you so much desire

to see. 'No. 7. The last will and testament of Tho. Goldencalf, dated June 17th, 1815.'" (He died June the 24th of the same year.)

"Ah! the precious instrument!" exclaimed Sir Joseph Job, eagerly extending his hand as if expecting to receive the will.

"This paper, as you perceive, gentlemen," I said, holding it up in a manner that all present might see it, "is especially addressed to myself, and it shall not quit my hands until I learn that some other has a better right to it."

I confess my heart failed me as I broke the seals, for I had seen but little of my father, and I knew that he had been a man of very peculiar opinions as well as habits. The will was all in his own handwriting, and it was very short. Summoning courage I read it aloud in the following words:

"In the name of God—Amen: I, Tho. Goldencalf, of the parish of Bow, in the city of London, do publish and declare this instrument to be my last will and testament:

"That is to say, I bequeath to my only child and much-beloved son, John Goldencalf, all my real estate in the parish of Bow and city of London, aforesaid, to be held in fee simple by him, his heirs, and assigns, forever.

"I bequeath to my said only child and much-beloved son, John Goldencalf, all my personal property of every sort and description whatever of which I may die possessed, including bonds and mortgages, public debt, bank stock, notes of hand, goods and chattels, and all others of my effects, to him, his heirs, or assigns.

"I nominate and appoint my said much-beloved son, John Goldencalf, to be the sole executor of this my last will and testament, counseling him not to confide in any of those who may profess to have been my friends; and particularly to turn a deaf ear to all the pretensions and solicitations of Sir Joseph Job, Knight. In witness whereof," etc., etc.

This will was duly executed, and it was witnessed by the nurse, his confidential clerk, and the housemaid.

"Property is in danger, Sir Joseph!" I dryly remarked, as I gathered together the papers in order to secure them.

"This will may be set aside, gentlemen!" cried the knight in a fury. "It contains a libel!"

"And for whose benefit, Sir Joseph?" I quietly inquired. "With or without the will, my title to my father's assets would seem to be equally valid."

This was so evidently true that the more prudent retired in silence; and even Sir Joseph, after a short delay, during which he appeared to be strangely agitated, withdrew. The next week his failure was announced, in consequence of some extravagant risks on 'Change, and eventually I received but three shillings and fourpence in the pound for my bond of sixty-three thousand.

When the money was paid I could not help exclaiming, mentally, "Property is in danger!"

The following morning Sir Joseph balanced his account with the world by cutting his throat.

CHAPTER V.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL-STAKE SYSTEM, THE DANGERS OF CONCENTRATION AND OTHER MORAL AND IMMORAL CURIOSITIES.

THE affairs of my father were almost as easy of settlement as those of a pauper. In twenty-four hours I was completely master of them, and found myself, if not the richest, certainly one of the richest subjects of Europe. I say subjects, for sovereigns frequently have a way of appropriating the effects of others that would render a pretension to rivalry ridiculous. Debts there were none; and, if there had been, ready money was not wanting; the balance in cash in my favor at the bank amounted in itself to a fortune.

The reader may now suppose that I was perfectly happy. Without a solitary claim on either my time or my estate, I was in the enjoyment of an income that materially exceeded the revenues of many reigning princes. I had not an expensive

nor a vicious habit of any sort. Of houses, horses, hounds, packs, and menials, there were none to vex or perplex me. In every particular, save one, I was completely my own master. That one was the near, dear, cherished sentiment that rendered Anna in my eyes an angel (and truly she was little short of it in those of other people), and made her the polar star to which every wish pointed. How gladly would I have paid half a million just then to be the grandson of a baronet with precedency from the seventeenth century!

There was, however, another and a present cause for uneasiness that gave me even more concern than the fact that my family reached the dark ages with so much embarrassing facility. In witnessing the dying agony of my ancestor I had got a dread lesson on the vanity, the hopeless character, the dangers, and the delusions of wealth that time can never eradicate. The history of its accumulation was ever present to mar the pleasure of its possession. I do not mean that I suspected what by the world's convention is deemed dishonesty—of that there had been no necessity—but simply that the heartless and estranged existence, the waste of energies, the blunted charities, and the isolated and distrustful habits of my father appeared to me to be but poorly requited by the joyless ownership of its millions. I would have given largely to be directed in such a way as while escaping the wastefulness of the shoals of Scylla I might in my own case steer clear of the miserly rocks of Charybdis.

When I drove from between the smoky lines of the London houses into the green fields, and amid the blossoming hedges, this earth looked beautiful, and as if it were made to be loved. I saw in it the workmanship of a divine and beneficent Creator, and it was not difficult to persuade myself that he who dwelt in the confusion of a town in order to transfer gold from the pocket of his neighbor to his own had mistaken the objects of his being. My poor ancestor, who had never quitted London, stood before me with his dying regrets; and my first resolution was to live in open communion with my kind. So intense, indeed, did my anxiety to execute this purpose become that it might have led even to frenzy had not a fortunate circumstance interposed to save me from so dire a calamity.

The coach in which I had taken passage (for I purposely avoided the parade and trouble of post-chaise and servants), passed through a market town of known loyalty on the eve of a contested election. This appeal to the intelligence and patriotism of the constituency had occurred in consequence of the late incumbent having taken office. The new minister, for he was a member of the cabinet, had just ended his canvass, and he was about to address his fellow-subjects from a window of the tavern in which he lodged. Fatigued, but ready to receive mental relief by any means, I threw myself from the coach, secured a room, and made one of the multitude.

The favorite candidate occupied a large balcony, surrounded by his principal friends, among whom it was delightful to see earls, lords John, baronets, dignitaries of the Church, tradesmen of influence in the borough, and even a mechanic or two, all squeezed together in the agreeable amalgamation of political affinity. Here, then, thought I, is an example of the heavenly charities! The candidate himself, the son and heir of a peer, feels that he is truly of the same flesh and blood as his constituents; how amiably he smiles!—how bland are his manners!—and with what cordiality does he shake hands with the greasiest and the worst! There must be a corrective to human pride, a stimulus to the charities, a never-ending lesson of benevolence, in this part of our excellent system, and I will look further into it. The candidate appeared, and his harangue commenced.

Memory would fail me were I to attempt recording the precise language of the orator, but his opinions and precepts are so deeply graven on my recollection that I do not fear misrepresenting them. He commenced with a very proper and eloquent eulogium on the constitution, which he fearlessly pronounced to be in

its way the very perfection of human reason; in proof of which he adduced the well ascertained fact that it had always been known throughout the vicissitudes and trials of so many centuries to accommodate itself to circumstances, abhorring change. "Yes, my friends," he exclaimed, in a burst of patriotic and constitutional fervor, "whether under the roses or the lilies — the Tudors, the Stuarts, or the illustrious house of Brunswick, this glorious structure has resisted the storms of faction, has been able to receive under its sheltering roof the most opposite elements of domestic strife, affording protection, warmth, ay, and food and raiment" (here the orator happily laid his hand on the shoulder of a butcher, who wore a frieze overcoat that made him look not unlike a stall-fed beast) "yes, food and raiment, victuals and drink, to the meanest subject in the realm. Nor is this all; it is a constitution peculiarly English; and who is there so base, so vile, so untrue to himself, to his fathers, to his descendants, as to turn his back on a constitution that is thoroughly and inherently English, a constitution that he has nherited from his ancestors, and which, by every obligation both human and devine he is bound to transmit unchanged to posterity;" here the orator, who continued to speak, however, was deafened by shouts of applause, and that part of the subject might very fairly be considered as definitely settled.

From the constitution as a whole the candidate next proceeded to extol the particular feature of it that was known as the borough of Householder. According to his own account of this portion of the government, its dwellers were animated by the noblest spirit of independence, the most rooted determination to uphold the ministry of which he was the least worthy member, and were distinguished by what in an ecstasy of political eloquence he happily termed the most freeborn understanding of its rights and privileges. This loyal and judicious borough had never been known to waste its favors on those who had not a stake in the community. It understood that fundamental principle of good government which lays down the axiom that none were to be trusted but those who had a visible and an extended interest in the country; for, without these pledges of honesty and independence, what had the elector to expect but bribery and corruption—a traffic in his dearest rights, and a bargaining that might destroy the glorious institutions under which he dwelt. This part of the harangue was listened to in respectful silence, and shortly after the orator concluded, when the electors dispersed, with, no doubt, a better opinion of themselves and the constitution than it had probably been their good fortune to entertain since the previous election.

Accident placed me at dinner (the house being crowded) at the same table with an attorney who had been very active the whole morning among the Householders, and who I soon learned, from himself, was the especial agent of the owner of the independent borough in question. He told me that he had come down with the expectation of disposing of the whole property to Lord Pledge, the ministerial candidate named; but the means had not been forthcoming, as he had been led to hope, and the bargain was unluckily broken off at the very moment when it was of the utmost importance to know to whom the independent electors rightfully belonged.

"His lordship, however," continued the attorney, winking, "has done what is handsome; and there can be no more doubt of his election than there would be of yours did you happen to own the borough."

"And is the property now open for sale?" I asked.

"Certainly—my principal can hold out no longer. The price is settled, and I have his power of attorney to make the preliminary bargain. 'Tis a thousand pities that the public mind should be left in this undecided state on the eve of an election."

"Then, sir, I will be the purchaser."

My companion looked at me with astonishment and doubt. He had transacted too much business of this nature,

however, not to feel his way before he was either off or on.

"The price of the estate is three hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds, sir, and the rental is only six!"

"Be it so. My name is Goldencalf; by accompanying me to town you shall receive the money."

"Goldencalf! What, sir, the only son and heir of the late Thomas Goldencalf, of Cheapside!"

"The same. My father has not been dead a month."

"Pardon me, sir—convince me of your identity—we must be particular in matters of this sort—and you shall have possession of the property in season to secure your own election, or that of any of your friends. I will return Lord Pledge his small advances, and another time he will know better than to fail of keeping his promises. What is a borough good for if a nobleman's word is not sacred? You will find the electors, in particular, every way worthy of your favor. They are as frank, loyal and straightforward a constituency as any in England. No skulking behind the ballot for them! and in all respects they are fearless Englishmen, who will do what they say, and say whatever their landlord shall please to require of them."

As I had sundry letters and other documents about me, nothing was easier than to convince the attorney of my identity. He called for pen and ink; drew out of his pocket the contract that had been prepared for Lord Pledge; gave it to me to read; filled the blanks; and, affixing his name, called the waiters as witnesses, and, presented me the paper with a promptitude and respect that I found really delightful. So much, thought I, for having given pledges to society by the purchase of a borough. I drew on my bankers for three hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds, and arose from table virtually the owner of the estate of Householder, and of the political consciences of its tenantry.

A fact so important could not long be unknown; and in a few minutes all eyes in the coffee-room were upon me. The landlord presented himself, and begged I would do him the honor to take possession of his family parlor, there being no other at his disposal. I was hardly installed before a servant in a handsome livery presented the following note:

"Dear Mr. Goldencalf—I have this moment heard of your being in town, and am exceedingly rejoiced to learn it. A long intimacy with your late excellent and most loyal father justifies my claiming you for a friend, and I waive all ceremony (official, of course, is meant, there being no reason for any other between us), and beg to be admitted for half an hour.

"Dear Mr. Goldencalf,

"Yours very faithfully and sincerely,

"Pledge.

"—— Goldencalf, Esquire.
"*Monday evening.*"

I begged that the noble visitor might not be made to wait a moment. Lord Pledge met me like an old and intimate friend. He made a hundred handsome inquiries after my dead ancestor; spoke feelingly of his regret at not having been summoned to attend his death-bed; and then very ingenuously and warmly congratulated me on my succession to so large a property.

"I hear, too, you have bought this borough, my dear sir. I could not make it convenient just at this particular moment to conclude my own arrangement—but it is a good thing. Three hundred and twenty thousand, I suppose, as was mentioned between me and the other party?"

"Three hundred and twenty-*five* thousand, Lord Pledge."

I perceived by the countenance of the noble candidate that I had paid the odd five thousand as a fine—a circumstance which accounted for the promptitude of the attorney in the transaction, he most probably pocketing the difference himself.

"You mean to sit, of course?"

"I do, my lord, as one of the members, at the next general election; but at present I shall be most happy to aid your return."

"My dear Mr. Goldencalf—"

"Really, without presuming to compliment, Lord Pledge, the noble sentiments

I heard you express this morning were so very proper, so exceedingly statesman-like, so truly English, that I shall feel infinitely more satisfaction in knowing that you will fill the vacant seat than if it were in my own possession."

"I honor your public spirit, Mr. Goldencalf, and only wish to God there was more of it in the world. But you can count on our friendship, sir. What you have just remarked is true, very true, only too true, true to a hair—a-a-a—I mean, my dear Mr. Goldencalf, most especially those sentiments of mine which—a-a-a—I say it, before God, without vanity—but which, as you have so very ably intimated, are so truly proper and English."

"I sincerely think so, Lord Pledge, or I should not have said it. I am peculiarly situated myself. With an immense fortune, without rank, name or connections, nothing is easier than for one of my years to be led astray; and it is my ardent desire to hit upon some expedient that may connect me properly with society."

"Marry, my dear young friend—select a wife from among the fair and virtuous of this happy isle—unluckily I can propose nothing in this way myself—for both my own sisters are disposed of."

"I have made choice, already, I thank you a thousand times, my dear Lord Pledge; although I scarcely dare execute my own wishes. There are objections—if I were only the child, now, of a baronet's second son, or—"

"Become a baronet yourself," once more interrupted my noble friend, with an evident relief from suspense; for I verily believe he thought I was about to ask for something better. "Your affair shall be arranged by the end of the week—and if there is anything else I can do for you, I beg you to name it without reserve."

"If I could hear a few more of those remarkable sentiments of yours, concerning the stake we should all have in society, I think it would relieve my mind."

My companion looked at me a moment with a very awkward sort of an intensity, drew his hand across his brows, reflected, and then obligingly complied.

"You attach too much importance, Mr. Goldencalf, to a few certainly very just but very ill-arranged ideas. That a man without a proper stake in society is little better than the beasts of the fields, I hold to be so obvious that it is unnecessary to dwell on the point. Reason as you will, forward or backward, you arrive at the same result—he that hath nothing is usually treated by mankind little better than a dog, and he that is little better than a dog usually has nothing. Again. What distinguishes the savage from the civilized man? Why, civilization, to be sure. Now, what is civilization? The arts of life. What feeds, nourishes, sustains the arts of life? Money or property. By consequence, civilization is property, and property is civilization. If the control of a country is in the hands of those who possess the property, the government is a civilized government; but, on the other hand, if it is in the hands of those who have no property, the government is necessarily an uncivilized government. It is quite impossible that any one should become a safe statesman who does not possess a direct property interest in society. You know there is not a tyro of our political sect who does not fully admit the truth of this axiom."

"Mr. Pitt?"

"Why, Pitt was certainly an exception in one way; but then, you will recollect, he was the immediate representative of the Tories, who own most of the property of England."

"Mr. Fox?"

"Fox represented the Whigs, who own all the rest, you know. Now, my dear Goldencalf, reason as you will, we shall always arrive at the same results. You will, of course, as you have just said, take one of the seats yourself at the next general election?"

"I shall be too proud of being your colleague to hesitate."

This speech sealed our friendship; for it was a pledge to my noble acquaintance of his future connection with the borough. He was much too high-bred to express his thanks in vulgar phrases (though high-breeding rarely exhibits all its finer

qualities pending an election), but—a man of the world, and one of a class whose main business is to put the *suavitor in modo*, as the French have it, *en evidence* —the reader may be sure that when we parted that night I was in perfect good humor with myself, and as a matter of course, with my new acquaintance.

The next day the canvass was renewed, and we had another convincing speech on the subject of the virtue of "a stake in society"; for Lord Pledge was tactician enough to attack the citadel, once assured of its weak point, rather than expend his efforts on the outworks of the place. That night the attorney arrived from town with the title-deeds all properly executed (they had been some time in preparation for Lord Pledge), and the following morning early the tenants were served with the usual notices, with a handsomely expressed sentiment on my part in favor of "a stake in society." About noon Lord Pledge walked over the course, as it is expressed at Newmarket and Doncaster. After dinner we separated, my noble friend returning to town, while I pursued my way to the Rectory.

Anna never appeared more fresh, more serene, more elevated above mortality, than when we met, a week after I had quitted Householder, in the breakfast-parlor of her father's abode.

"You are beginning to look like yourself again, Jack," she said, extending her hand with the simple cordiality of an Englishwoman; "and I hope we shall find you more rational."

"Ah, Anna, if I could only presume to throw myself at your feet, and tell you how much and what I feel, I should be the happiest fellow in all England."

"As it is, you are the most miserable!" the laughing girl answered, as, crimsoned to the temples, she drew away the hand I was foolishly pressing against my heart. "Let us go to breakfast, Mr. Goldencalf —my father has ridden across the country to visit Dr. Liturgy."

"Anna," I said, after seating myself and taking a cup of tea from fingers that were rosy as the morn, "I fear that you are the greatest enemy that I have on earth."

"John Goldencalf!" exclaimed the startled girl, turning pale and then flushing violently. "Pray explain yourself."

"I love you to my heart's core—could marry you, and then, I fear, worship you, as man never before worshiped woman."

Anna laughed faintly.

"And you feel in danger of the sin of idolatry?" she at length succeeded in saying.

"No, I am in danger of narrowing my sympathies—of losing a broad and safe hold of life—of losing my proper stake in society—of—in short, of becoming as useless to my fellows as my poor, poor father, and of making an end as miserable. Oh! Anna, could you have witnessed the hopelessness of that death-bed, you could never wish me a fate like his!"

My pen is unequal to convey an adequate idea of the expression with which Anna regarded me. Wonder, doubt, apprehension, affection, and anguish were all beaming in her eyes; but the unnatural brightness of these conflicting sentiments was tempered by a softness that resembled the pearly luster of an Italian sky.

"If I yield to my fondness, Anna, in what will my condition differ from that of my miserable father's? He concentrated his feelings in the love of money, and I—yes, I feel it here, I know it is here—I should love you so intensely as to shut out every generous sentiment in favor of others. I have a fearful responsibility on my shoulders—wealth, gold; gold beyond limits—and to save my very soul I must extend, not narrow, my interest in my fellow-creatures. Were there a hundred such Annas, I might press you all to my heart—but, one!—no—one would be misery—'twould be perdition! The very excess of such a passion would render me a heartless miser, unworthy of the confidence of my fellow-men!"

The radiant and yet serene eyes of Anna seemed to read my soul; and when I had done speaking she arose, stole timidly to my side of the table, as woman approaches when she feels most, placed her velvet-

like hand on my burning forehead, pressed its throbbing pulses gently to her heart, burst into tears, and fled.

We dined alone, nor did we meet again until the dinner-hour. The manner of Anna was soothing, gentle, even affectionate; but she carefully avoided the subject of the morning. As for myself, I was constantly brooding over the danger of concentrating interests, and of the excellence of the social-stake system.

"Your spirits will be better, Jack, in a day or two," said Anna, when we had taken wine after the soup. "Country air and old friends will restore your freshness and color."

"If there were a thousand Annas I could be happy as man was never happy before! But I must not, dare not lessen my hold on society."

"All of which proves my insufficiency to render you happy. But here comes Francis with yesterday morning's paper —let us see what society is about in London."

After a few moments of intense occupation with the journal, an exclamation of pleasure and surprise escaped the sweet girl. On raising my eyes I saw her gazing (as I fancied) fondly at myself.

"Read what you have that seems to give you so much pleasure."

She complied, reading with an eager and tremulous voice the following paragraph:

"His Majesty has been most graciously pleased to raise John Goldencalf, of Householder Hall, in the county of Dorset, and of Cheapside, Esquire, to the dignity of a baronet of the united kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland."

"Sir John Goldencalf, I have the honor to drink to your health and happiness!" cried the delighted girl, brightening like the dawn, and wetting her pouting lip with liquor less ruby than itself. "Here, Francis, fill a bumper and drink to the new baronet."

The gray-headed butler did as ordered with a very good grace, and then hurried into the servants' hall to communicate the news.

"Here at least, Jack, is a new hold that society has on you, whatever hold you may have on society."

I was pleased because she was pleased, and because it showed that Lord Pledge had some sense of gratitude (although he afterward took occasion to intimate that I owed the favor chiefly to *hope*), and I believe my eyes never expressed more fondness.

"Lady Goldencalf would not have an awkward sound after all, dearest Anna."

"As applied to one, Sir John, it might possibly do; but not as applied to a hundred." Anna laughed, blushed, burst into tears once more and again fled.

What right have I to trifle with the feelings of this single-hearted and excellent girl, said I to myself; it is evident that the subject distresses her—she is unequal to its discussion, and it is unmanly and improper in me to treat it in this manner. I must be true to my character as a gentleman and a man—ay, and, under present circumstances, as a baronet; and—I will never speak of it again as long as I live.

The following day I took leave of Dr. Etherington and his daughter, with the avowed intention of traveling for a year or two. The good rector gave me much friendly advice, flattered me with expressions of confidence in my discretion and, squeezing me warmly by the hand, begged me to recollect that I had always a home at the Rectory. When I had made my adieus to the father, I went, with a sorrowful heart, in quest of the daughter. She was still in the little breakfast parlor —that parlor so loved! I found her pale, timid, sensitive, bland but serene. Little could ever disturb that heavenly quality in the dear girl; if she laughed, it was with a restrained and moderated joy; if she wept, it was like rain falling from a sky that still shone with the luster of the sun. It was only when feeling and nature were unutterably big within her, that some irresistible impulse of her sex betrayed her into emotions like those I had twice witnessed so lately.

"You are about to leave us, Jack," she said, holding out her hand kindly and

without the affectation of an indifference she did not feel; "you will see many strange faces, but you will see none who—"

I waited for the completion of the sentence, but, although she struggled hard for self-possession, it was never finished.

"At my age, Anna, and with my means, it would be unbecoming to remain at home, when, if I may so express it, 'human nature is abroad.' I go to quicken my sympathies, to open my heart to my kind, and to avoid the cruel regrets that tortured the death-bed of my father."

"Well—well," interrupted the sobbing girl, "we will talk of it no more. It is best that you should travel; and so adieu, with a thousand—nay, millions of good wishes for your happiness and safe return. You will come back to us, Jack, when tired of other scenes!"

This was said with gentle earnestness and a sincerity so winning that it came near upsetting all my philosophy; but I could not marry the whole sex, and to bind down my affections in one would have been giving the death-blow to the development of that sublime principle on which I was bent, and which I had already decided was to make me worthy of my fortune and the ornament of my species. Had I been offered a kingdom, however, I could not speak. I took the unresisting girl in my arms, folded her to my heart, pressed a burning kiss on her cheek, and withdrew.

"You will come back to us, Jack?" she half whispered, as her hand was reluctantly drawn through my own.

Oh! Anna, it was indeed painful to abandon thy frank and gentle confidence, thy radiant beauty, thy serene affections, and all thy womanly virtues, in order to practice my newly discovered theory! Long did thy presence haunt me—nay, never did it entirely desert me—putting my constancy to a severe proof, and threatening at each remove to contract the lengthening chain that still bound me to thee, thy fireside and thy altars! But I triumphed, and went abroad upon the earth with a heart expanding toward all the creatures of God, though thy image was still enshrined in its inmost core, shining in womanly glory, pure, radiant, and without spot, like the floating prism that forms the luster of the diamond.

CHAPTER VI.

A THEORY OF PALPABLE SUBLIMITY—SOME PRACTICAL IDEAS, AND THE COMMENCEMENT OF ADVENTURES.

THE recollection of the intense feeling of that important period of my life, in some measure, disturbed the connection of the narrative, and may possibly have left some little obscurity in the mind of the reader on the subject of the new sources of happiness that had broken on my own intelligence. A word here in the way of elucidation, therefore, may not be misapplied, although it is my purpose to refer more to my acts and to the wonderful incidents it will shortly be my duty to lay before the world for a just understanding of my views than to mere verbal explanations.

Happiness—happiness, here and hereafter, was my goal. I aimed at a life of useful and active benevolence, a death-bed of hope and joy, and an eternity of fruition. With such an object before me, my thoughts, from the moment that I witnessed the dying regrets of my father, had been intensely brooding over the means of attainment. Surprising as, no doubt, it will appear to vulgar minds, I obtained the clew to this sublime mystery at the late election for the borough of Householder, and from the lips of my Lord Pledge. Like other important discoveries, it is very simple when understood, being easily rendered intelligible to the dullest capacities, as, indeed, in equity, ought to be the case with every principle that is so intimately connected with the well-being of man.

It is a universally admitted truth that happiness is the only legitimate object of all human associations. The ruled concede a certain portion of their natural rights for the benefits of peace, security, and order, with the understanding that

they are to enjoy the remainder as their own proper indefeasible estate. It is true that there exist in different nations some material differences of opinion on the subject of the quantities to be bestowed and retained; but these aberrations from a just medium are no more than so many caprices of the human judgment, and in no manner do they affect the principle. I found also that all the wisest and best of the species, or, what is much the same thing, the most responsible, uniformly maintain that he who has the largest stake in society is, in the nature of things, the most qualified to administer its affairs. By a stake in society is meant, agreeable to universal convention, a multiplication of those interests which occupy us in our daily concerns—or what is vulgarly called property. This principle works by exciting us to do right through those heavy investments of our own which would inevitably suffer were we to do wrong. The proposition is now clear, nor can the premises readily be mistaken. Happiness is the aim of society; and property, or a vested interest in that society, is the best pledge of our disinterestedness and justice, and the best qualification for its proper control. It follows as a legitimate corollary, that a multiplication of those interests will increase the stake, and render us more and more worthy of the trust by elevating us as near as may be to the pure and ethereal condition of the angels.

One of those happy accidents which sometimes make men emperors and kings, had made me, perhaps, the richest subject of Europe. With this polar star of theory shining before my eyes, and with practical means so ample, it would have been clearly my own fault had I not steered my bark into the right haven. If he who had the heaviest investments was the most likely to love his fellows, there could be no great difficulty for one in my situation to take the lead in philanthropy. It is true that, with superficial observers, the instance of my own immediate ancestor might be supposed to form an exception, or rather an objection, to the theory. So far from this being the case, however, it proves the very reverse. My father, in a great measure, had concentrated all his investments in the national debt! Now, beyond all cavil, he loved the funds intensely; grew violent when they were assailed; cried out for bayonets when the mass declaimed against taxation; eulogized the gallows when there were menaces of revolt, and in a hundred other ways proved that "where the treasure is, there will the heart be also." The instance of my father, therefore, like all exceptions, only went to prove the excellence of the rule. He had merely fallen into the error of contraction; when the only safe course was that of expansion. I resolved to expand; to do that which probably no political economist had ever yet thought of doing—in short, to carry out the principle of the social stake in such a way as should cause me to love all things, and consequently to become worthy of being intrusted with the care of all things.

On reaching town my earliest visit was one of thanks to my Lord Pledge. At first I had felt some doubts as to whether the baronetey would or would not aid the system of philanthropy; for by raising me above a large portion of my kind, it was in so much at least a removal from philanthropical sympathies; but by the time the patent was received and fees were paid, I found that it might fairly be considered a pecuniary investment, and that it was consequently brought within the rule I had prescribed for my own government.

The next thing was to employ suitable agents to aid in making the purchases that were necessary to attach me to mankind. A month was diligently occupied in this way. As ready money was not wanting, and I was not very particular on the subject of prices, at the end of that time I began to have certain incipient sentiments which went to prove the triumphant success of the experiment. In other words, I owned much, and was beginning to take a lively interest in all I owned.

I made purchases of estates in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. This division of real property was meant to equal-

ize my sentiments justly between the different portions of my native country. Not satisfied with this, however, I extended the system to the colonies. I had East India shares, a running ship, Canada land, a plantation in Jamaica, sheep at the Cape and at New South Wales, an indigo concern at Bengal, an establishment for the collection of antiques in the Ionian Isles, and a connection with a shipping house for the general supply of our various dependencies with beer, bacon, cheese, broadcloths, and ironmongery. From the British empire my interests were soon extended into other countries. On the Garonne and Xeres I bought vineyards. In Germany I took some shares in different salt and coal mines; the same in South America in the precious metals; in Russia I dipped deeply into tallow; in Switzerland I set up an extensive manufactory of watches, and bought all the horses for a voiturier on a large scale. I had silkworms in Lombardy, olives and hats in Tuscany, a bath in Lucca, and a maccaroni establishment at Naples. To Sicily I sent funds for the purchase of wheat, and at Rome I kept a connoisseur to conduct a general agency in the supply of British articles, such as mustard, porter, pickles, and corned beef, as well as for the forwarding of pictures, and statues to the lovers of the arts and of *virtù*.

By the time all this was effected I found my hands full of business. Method, suitable agents, and a resolution to success smoothed the way, however, and I began to look about me and to take my breath. By way of relaxation, I now descended into details; and for a few days I frequented the meetings of those who are called "the Saints," in order to see if something might not be done toward the attainment of my object through their instrumentality. I cannot say that this experiment met with all the success I had anticipated. I heard a great deal of subtle discussion, found that manner was of more account than matter, and had unreasonable and ceaseless appeals to my pocket. So near a view of charity had a tendency to expose its blemishes, as the brilliancy of the sun is known to exhibit defects on the face of beauty, which escape the eye when seen through the medium of that artificial light for which they are best adapted; and I soon contented myself with sending my contributions at proper intervals, keeping aloof in person. This experiment gave me occasion to perceive that human virtues, like little candles, shine best in the dark, and that their radiance is chiefly owing to the atmosphere of a "naughty world." From speculating I returned to facts.

The question of slavery had agitated the benevolent for some years, and finding a singular apathy in my own bosom on this important subject, I bought five hundred of each sex to stimulate my sympathies. This led me nearer to the United States of America, a country that I had endeavored to blot out of my recollection; for while thus encouraging a love for the species, I had scarcely thought it necessary to go so far from home. As no rule exists without an exception, I confess I was a good deal disposed to believe that a Yankee might very fairly be an omission in an Englishman's philanthropy. But "in for a penny in for a pound." The negroes led me to the banks of the Mississippi, where I was soon the owner of both a sugar and a cotton plantation. In addition to these purchases I took shares in divers South-Seamen, owned a coral and pearl fishery of my own, and sent an agent with a proposition to King Tamamamaah to create a monopoly of sandal-wood in our joint behalf.

The earth and all it contained assumed new glories in my eyes. I had fulfilled the essential condition of the political economists, the jurists, the constitution-mongers, and all the "talents and decency," and had stakes in half the societies of the world. I was fit to govern, I was fit to advise, to dictate to most of the people of Christendom; for I had taken a direct interest in their welfares by making them my own. Twenty times was I about to jump into a post-chaise, and to gallop down to the Rectory in order to lay my new-born alliance with the species, and all its attendant felicity,

at the feet of Anna; but the terrible thought of monogamy, and of its sympathy-withering consequences, as often stayed my course. I wrote to her weekly, however, making her the participator of a portion of my happiness, though I never had the satisfaction of receiving a single line in reply.

Fairly emancipated from selfishness, and pledged to the species, I now quitted England on a tour of philanthropical inspection. I shall not weary the reader with an account of my journeys over the beaten tracks of the continent, but transport him and myself at once to Paris, in which city I arrived on the 17th of May, Anno Domini 1819. I had seen much, fancied myself improved, and, by constant dwelling on my system, saw its excellences as plainly as Napoleon saw the celebrated star which defied the duller vision of his uncle, the cardinal. At the same time, as usually happens with those who direct all their energies to a given point, the opinions originally formed of certain portions of my theory began to undergo mutations, as nearer and more practical views pointed out inconsistencies and exposed defects. As regards Anna in particular, the quiet, gentle, unobtrusive, and yet distinct picture of womanly loveliness that was rarely absent from my mind, had for the past twelvemonth haunted me with a constancy of argument that might have unsettled the Newtonian scheme of philosophy itself. I already more than questioned whether the benefit to be derived from the support of one so affectionate and true would not fully counterbalance the disadvantage of a concentration of interest, so far as the sex was concerned. This growing opinion was fast getting to be conviction, when I encountered on the boulevards one day an old country neighbor of the rector's, who gave me the best account of the family, adding, after descanting on the beauty and excellence of Anna herself, that the dear girl had quite lately actually refused a peer of the realm, who enjoyed all the acknowledged advantages of youth, riches, birth, rank, and a good name, and who had selected her from a deep conviction of her worth and of her ability to make any sensible man happy. As to my own power over the heart of Anna I never entertained a doubt. She had betrayed it in a thousand ways and on a hundred occasions; nor had I been at all backward in letting her understand how highly I valued her dear self, although I had never yet screwed up my resolution so high as distinctly to propose for her hand. But all my unsettled purposes became concentrated on hearing this welcome intelligence; and, taking an abrupt leave of my old acquaintance, I hurried home and wrote the following letter:

"Dear—very dear, nay—dearest ANNA, I met your old neighbor —— this morning on the boulevards, and during an interview of an hour we did little else but talk of thee. Although it has been my most ardent and most predominant wish to open my heart to the whole species, yet, Anna, I fear I have loved thee alone! Absence, so far from expanding, appears to contract my affections, too many of which center in thy sweet form and excellent virtues. The remedy I proposed is insufficient, and I begin to think that matrimony alone can leave me master of sufficient freedom of thought and action to turn the attention I ought to the rest of the human race. Thou hast been with me in idea in the four corners of the earth, by sea and by land, in dangers and in safety, in all seasons, regions, and situations, and there is no sufficient reason why those who are ever present in the spirit should be materially separated. Thou hast only to say a word, to whisper a hope, to breathe a wish, and I will throw myself a repentant truant at thy feet and implore thy pity. When united, however, we will not lose ourselves in the sordid and narrow paths of selfishness, but come forth again in company to acquire a new and still more powerful hold on this beautiful creation, of which, by this act, I acknowledge thee to be the most divine portion.

"Dearest, dearest Anna, thine and the species', Forever,

"JOHN GOLDENCALF.

"TO MISS ETHERINGTON."

If there was ever a happy fellow on earth it was myself when this letter was written, sealed, and fairly dispatched. The die was cast, and I walked into the air a regenerated and an elastic being! Let what might happen, I was sure of Anna. Her gentleness would calm my irritability; her prudence temper my energies; her bland but enduring affections soothe my soul. I felt at peace with all around me, myself included, and I found a sweet assurance of the wisdom of the step I had just taken in the expanding sentiment. If such were my sensations now that every thought centered in Anna, what would they not become when these personal transports were cooled by habit, and nature was left to the action of the ordinary impulses? I began to doubt of the infallibility of that part of my system which had given me so much pain, and to incline to the new doctrine that by concentration on particular parts we must come to love the whole. On examination there was reason to question whether it was not on this principle even that, as a special landholder, I attained so great an interest in my native island; for while I certainly did not own the whole of Great Britain, I felt that I had a profound respect for everything in it that was in any, even the most remote manner, connected with my own particular possessions.

A week flew by in delightful anticipations. The happiness of this short but heavenly period became so exciting, so exquisite, that I was on the point of giving birth to an improvement on my theory (or rather on the theory of the political economists and constitution-mongers, for it is in fact theirs and not mine), when the answer of Anna was received. If anticipation be a state of so much happiness — happiness being the great pursuit of man—why not invent a purely probationary condition of society?—why not change its elementary features from positive to anticipating interests, which would give more zest to life, and bestow felicity unimpaired by the dross of realities? I had determined to carry out this principle in practice by an experiment, and left the hotel to order an agent to advertise, and to enter into a treaty or two, for some new investments (without the smallest intention to bringing them to a conclusion), when the porter delivered me the ardently-expected letter. I never knew what would be the effect of taking a stake in society by anticipation, therefore; the contents of Anna's missive driving every subject that was not immediately connected with the dear writer, and with sad realities, completely out of my head. It is not improbable, however, that the new theory would have proved to be faulty, for I have often had occasion to remark that heirs (in remainder, for instance) manifest a hostility to the estate, by carrying out the principle of anticipation, rather than any of that prudent respect for social consequences to which the legislator looks with so much anxiety.

The letter of Anna was in the following words:

"Good—nay, Dear John—Thy letter was put into my hands yesterday. This is the fifth answer I have commenced, and you will therefore see that I do not write without reflection. I know thy excellent heart, John, better than it is known to thyself. It has either led thee to the discovery of a secret of the last importance to thy fellow-creatures, or it has led thee cruelly astray. An experiment so noble and so praiseworthy ought not to be abandoned on account of a few momentary misgivings concerning the result. Do not stay thy eagle flight at the instant thou art soaring so near the sun! Should we both judge it for our mutual happiness, I can become thy wife at a future day. We are still young, and there is no urgency for an immediate union. In the meantime, I will endeavor to prepare myself to be the companion of a philanthropist by practicing on thy theory, and, by expanding my own affections, render myself worthy to be the wife of one who has so large a stake in society, and who loves so many and so truly.

"Thine imitator and friend,

"Without change,

"ANNA ETHERINGTON.

"TO SIR JOHN GOLDENCALF, Bart."

"P. S.—You may perceive that I am in a state of improvement, for I have just refused the hand of Lord M'Dee, because I found I loved all his neighbors quite as well as I loved the young peer himself."

Ten thousand furies took possession of my soul, in the shape of so many demons of jealousy. Anna expending her affections! Anna taking any other stake in society than that I made sure she would accept through me! Anna teaching herself to love more than one, and that one myself! The thought was madness. I did not believe in the sincerity of her refusal of Lord M'Dee. I ran for a copy of the "Peerage" (for since my own elevation in life I regularly bought both that work and the "Baronetage"), and turned to the page that contained his name. He was a Scottish viscount who had just been created a baron of the United Kingdom, and his age was precisely that of my own. Here was a rival to excite distrust! By a singular contradiction in sentiments, the more I dreaded his power to injure me, the more I undervalued his means. While I fancied Anna was merely playing with me, and had in secret made up her mind to be a peeress, I had no doubt that the subject of her choice was both ill-favored and awkward, and had cheek-bones like a Tartar. While reading of the great antiquity of his family (which reached obscurity in the thirteenth century), I set it down as established that the first of his unknown predecessors was a bare-legged thief, and at the very moment that I imagined Anna was smiling on him, and retracting her coquettish denial, I could have sworn that he spoke with an unintelligible border accent, and that he had red hair!

The torment of such pictures grew to be intolerable, and I rushed into the open air for relief. How long or whither I wandered I know not; but on the morning of the following day I found I was seated in a *guinguette* near the base of Montmartre, eagerly devouring a roll and refreshing myself with sour wine. When a little recovered from the shock of discovering myself in a situation so novel (for, having no investments in *guinguettes*, I had not taken sufficient interest in these popular establishments ever to enter one before) I had leisure to look about and survey the company. Some fifty Frenchmen of the laboring classes were drinking on every side, and talking with a vehemence of gesticulation and a clamor that completely annihilated thought. This then, thought I, is a scene of popular happiness. These creatures are excellent fellows, enjoy themselves on liquor that has not paid the city duty; and perhaps I may seize upon some point that favors my system among spirits so frank and clamorous. Doubtless if any one among them is in possession of any important social secret it will not fail to escape him here. From meditations of this philosophical character I was suddenly aroused by a violent blow before me, accompanied with an exclamation in very tolerable English of the word—

"King!"

On the center of the board which did the office of a table, and directly beneath my eyes, lay a clinched fist of fearful dimensions, that in color and protuberances bore a good deal of resemblance to a freshly unearthed Jerusalem artichoke. Its sinews seemed to be cracking with tension, and the whole knob was so expressive of intense pugnacity that my eyes involuntarily sought its owner's face. I had unconsciously taken my seat directly opposite a man whose stature was nearly double that of the compact, bustling, sputtering, and sturdy little fellows who were bawling on every side of us, and whose skinny lips, instead of joining in the noise, were so firmly compressed as to render the crevice of the mouth no more strongly marked than a wrinkle in the brow of a man of sixty. His complexion was naturally fair, but exposure had tanned the skin of his face to the color of the *crackle* of a roasted pig; those parts which a painter would be apt to term the "high lights" being indicated by touches of red nearly as bright as fourth-proof brandy. His eyes were small, stern, fiery, and very gray; and just at the instant they met my admiring look they resembled two stray coals that

by some means had got separated from the body of adjacent heat in the face. He had a prominent, well-shaped nose, athwart which the skin was stretched like leather in the process of being rubbed down on the currier's bench, and his ropy black hair was carefully smoothed over his temples and brows, in a way to show that he was abroad on a holiday excursion.

When our eyes met this singular-looking being gave me a nod of friendly recognition, for no better reason that I could discover than the fact that I did not appear to be a Frenchman.

"Did mortal man ever listen to such fools, captain?" he observed, as if certain we must think alike on the subject.

"Really, I did not attend to what was said; there certainly is much noise."

"I don't pretend to understand a word of what they are saying, myself; but it *sounds* like thorough nonsense."

"My ear is not yet sufficiently acute to distinguish sense from nonsense by mere intonation and sound—but it would seem, sir, that you speak English only."

"Therein you are mistaken; for, being a great traveler, I have been compelled to look about me, and as a nat'ral consequence I speak a little of all languages. I do not say that I use the foreign parts of speech always fundamentally, but then I worry through an idee so as to make it legible and of use, especially in the way of eating and drinking. As to French, now, I can say '*don-nez-me some van*,' and '*don-nez-vous some pan*,' as well as the best of them; but when there are a dozen throats bawling at once, as is the case with these here chaps, why one might as well go on the top of Ape's Hill and hold a conversation with the people he will meet with there, as to pretend to hold a rational or a discussional discourse. For my part, where there is to be a conversation, I like every one to have his turn, keeping up the talk, as it might be, watch and watch; but among these Frenchmen it is pretty much as if their idees had been caged, and the door being suddenly opened, they fly out in a flock, just for the pleasure of saying they are at liberty."

I now perceived that my companion was a reflecting being, his ratiocination being connected by regular links, and that he did not boost his philosophy on the leaping-staff of impulse, like most of those who were sputtering, and arguing, and wrangling, with untiring lungs, in all corners of the *guinguette*. I frankly proposed, therefore, that we should quit the place and walk into the road, where our discourse would be less disturbed, and consequently more satisfactory. The proposal was well received, and we left the brawlers, walking by the outer boulevards toward my hotel in the Rue de Rivoli, by the way of the Champs Elysees.

CHAPTER VII.

TOUCHING AN AMPHIBIOUS ANIMAL, A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

I SOON took an interest in my new acquaintance. He was communicative, shrewd, and peculiar; and though apt to express himself quaintly, it was with the pith of one who had seen a great deal of at least one portion of his fellow-creatures. The conversation, under such circumstances, did not flag; on the contrary, it soon grew more interesting by the stranger's beginning to touch on his private interests. He told me that he was a mariner who had been cast ashore by one of the accidents of his calling, and, by way of putting in a word in his own favor, he gave me to understand that he had seen a great deal, more especially of that caste of his fellow-creatures who, like himself, live by frequenting the mighty deep.

"I am very happy," I said, "to have met with a stranger who can give me information touching an entire class of human beings with whom I have as yet had but little communion. In order that we may improve the occasion to the utmost, I propose that we introduce ourselves to each other at once, and swear an eternal friendship, or, at least, until we may find it convenient to dispense with the obligation."

"For my part, I am one who likes the friendship of a dog better than his enmity," returned my companion, with a singleness of purpose that left him no disposition to waste his breath in idle compliments. "I accept the offer, therefore, with all my heart; and this the more readily because you are the only one I have met for a week who can ask me how I do, without saying '*Come on, cong portez-vous.*' Being used to meet with squalls, however, I shall accept your offer under the last condition named."

I liked the stranger's caution. It denoted a proper care of character, and furnished a proof of responsibility. The condition was therefore accepted on my part as frankly as it had been urged on his.

"And now, sir," I added, when we had shaken each other very cordially by the hand, "may I presume to ask your name?"

"I am called Noah, and I don't care who knows it. I am not ashamed of either of my names, whatever else I may be ashamed of."

"Noah—?"

"Poke, at your service." He pronounced the word slowly and very distinctly, as if what he had just said of his self-confidence were true. As I had afterward occasion to take his signature, I shall at once give it in the proper form—"Captain Noah Poke."

"Of what part of England are you a native, Mr. Poke?"

"I believe I may say of the new parts."

"I do not know that any portion of the island was so designated. Will you have the good nature to explain yourself?"

"I'm a native of Stunin'tun, in the State of Connecticut, in *old* New England. My parents being dead, I was sent to sea a four-year-old, and here I am walking about the kingdom of France without a cent in my pocket, a shipwrecked mariner. Hard as my lot is, to say the truth, I'd about as leave starve as live by speaking their d——d lingo."

"Shipwrecked—a mariner—starving—and a Yankee!"

"All that, and may be more, too; though, by your leave, commodore, we'll drop the last title. I'm proud enough to call myself a Yankee, but my back is apt to get up when I hear an Englishman use the word. We are yet friends, and it may be well enough to continue so until some good comes of it to one or other of the parties."

"I ask your pardon, Mr. Poke, and will not offend again. Have you circumnavigated the globe?"

Captain Poke snapped his fingers in pure contempt of the simplicity of the question.

"Has the moon ever sailed round the 'arth! Look here a moment, commodore"—he took from his pocket an apple, of which he had been munching half a dozen during the walk, and held it up to view—"draw your lines which way you will on this sphere; crosswise or lengthwise, up or down, zigzag or perpendic'lar, and you will not find more traverses than I've worked about the old ball!"

"By land as well as by sea?"

"Why, as to the land, I've had my share of that, too; for it has been my hard fortune to run upon it, when a softer bed would have given a more quiet nap. This is just the present difficulty with me, for I am now tacking about among these Frenchmen in order to get afloat again, like an alligator floundering in the mud. I lost my schooner on the northeast coast of Russia—somewhere hereabouts," pointing to the precise spot on the apple; "we were up there trading in skins—and finding no means of reaching home by the road I'd come, and smelling salt water down hereaways, I've been shaping my course westward for the last eighteen months, steering as near as might be directly athwart Europe and Asia; and here I am at last within two days' run of Havre, which is, if I can get good Yankee planks beneath me once more, within some eighteen or twenty days' run of home."

"You allow me, then, to call the planks Yankee?"

"Call 'em what you please, commodore; though I should prefar to call 'em the '*Debby and Dolly* of Stunin'tun,' to any-

The inoffensive victims of this act of brutal tyrrany submitted with a patience worthy of the profoundest philosophy.—*The Monikins.*

thing else, for that was the name of the craft I lost. Well, the best of us are but frail, and the longest-winded man is no dolphin to swim with his head under water!"

"Pray, Mr. Poke, permit me to ask where you learned to speak the English language with so much purity?"

"Stunin'tun—I never had a mouthful of schooling but what I got at home. It's all homespun. I make no boast of scholarship; but as for navigating, or for finding my way about the 'arth, I'll turn my back on no man, unless it be to leave him behind. Now we have people with us who think a great deal of their geometry and astronomics, but I hold to no such slender threads. My way is, when there is occasion to go anywhere, to settle it well in my mind as to the place, and then to make as straight a wake as natur' will allow, taking little account of charts, which are as apt to put you wrong as right; and when they do get you into a scrape it's a smasher! Depend on yourself and human natur' is my rule; though I admit there is some accommodation in a compass, particularly in cold weather."

"Cold weather! I do not well comprehend the distinction."

"Why, I rather conclude that one's scent gets to be dullish in a frost; but this may be no more than a conceit after all, for the two times I've been wrecked were in summer, and both the accidents happened by sheer dint of hard blowing, and in broad daylight, when nothing human short of a change of wind could have saved us."

"And you prefer this peculiar sort of navigation?"

"To all others, especially in the sealing business, which is my raal occupation. It's the very best way in the world to discover islands; and everybody knows that we sealers are always on the lookout for su'thin' of that sort."

"Will you suffer me to inquire, Captain Poke, how many times you have doubled Cape Horn?"

My navigator threw a quick, jealous glance at me, as if he distrusted the nature of the question.

"Why, that is neither here nor there; perhaps I don't double either of the capes, perhaps I do. I get into the South Sea with my craft, and it's of no great moment how it's done. A skin is worth just as much in the market, though the furrier may not happen to have a glossary of the road it has traveled."

"A glossary?"

"What matters a signification, commodore, when people understand each other? This overland journey has put me to my wits, for you will understand that I've had to travel among natives that cannot speak a syllable of the homespun; so I brought the schooner's dictionary with me as a sort of terrestrial almanac, and I fancied that, as they spoke gibberish to me, the best way was to give it to them back again as near as might be in their own coin, hoping I might hit on su'thin' to their liking. By this means I've come to be rather more voluble than formerly."

"The idea was happy."

"No doubt it was, as is just evinced. But having given you a pretty clear insight into my natur' and occupation, it is time that I ask a few questions of you. This is a business, you must know, at which we do a good deal at Stunin'tun, and at which we are commonly thought to be handy."

"Put your questions, Captain Poke; I hope the answers will be satisfactory."

"Your name?"

"John Goldencalf—by the favor of his majesty, Sir John Goldencalf, Baronet."

"Sir John Goldencalf—by the favor of his majesty a baronet! Is baronet a calling? or what sort of a crittur or thing is it?"

"It is my rank in the kingdom to which I belong."

"I begin to understand what you mean. Among your nation mankind is what we call stationed, like a ship's people that are called to go about; you have a certain berth in that kingdom of yours, much as I should have in a sealing schooner."

"Exactly so; and I presume you will allow that order, and propriety, and safety result from this method among mariners?"

"No doubt—no doubt, we station anew, however, each v'yage, according to experience; I'm not so sure that it would do to take even the cook from father to son, or we might have a pretty mess of it."

Here the sealer commenced a series of questions, which he put with a vigor and perseverance that I fear left me without a single fact of my life unrevealed, except those connected with the sacred sentiment that bound me to Anna, and which were far too hallowed to escape me even under the ordeal of a Stunnin'tun inquisitor. In short, finding that I was nearly helpless in such hands, I made a merit of necessity, and yielded up my secrets as wood in a vise discharges its moisture. It was scarcely possible that a mind like mine, subjected to the action of such a pair of moral screws, should not yield some hints touching its besetting propensities. The captain seized this clew, and he went at the theory like a bull-dog at the muzzle of an ox.

To oblige him, therefore, I entered at some length into an explanation of my system. After the general remarks that were necessary to give a stranger an insight into its leading principles, I gave him to understand that I had long been looking for one like him, for a purpose that shall now be explained to the reader. I had entertained some negotiations with Tamahamaah, and had certain investments in the pearl and whale fisheries, it is true; but on the whole my relations with all that portion of mankind who inhabit the islands of the Pacific, the northwest coast of America, and the northeast coast of the old continent, were rather loose, and generally in an unsettled and vague condition; and it appeared to me that I had been singularly favored in having a man so well adapted to their regeneration thrown as it were by Providence, and in a manner so unusual, directly in my way. I now frankly proposed, therefore, to fit out an expedition; that should be partly of trade and partly of discovery, in order to expand my interests in this new direction, and to place my new acquaintance at its head. Ten minutes of earnest explanation on my part sufficed to put my companion in possession of the leading features of the plan. When I had ended this direct appeal to his love of enterprise, I was answered by the favorite exclamation of—

"King!"

"I do not wonder, Captain Poke, that your admiration breaks out in this manner; for I believe few men fairly enter into the beauty of this benevolent system who are not struck equally with its grandeur and its simplicity. May I count on your assistance?"

"This is a new idee, Sir Goldencalf—"

"Sir John Goldencalf, if you please, sir."

"A new idee, Sir John Goldencalf, and it needs circumspection. Circumspection in a bargain is the certain way to steer clear of misunderstandings. You wish a navigator to take your craft, let her be what she will, into unknown seas, and I wish, naturally, to make a straight course for Stunin'tun. You see, the bargain is in apogee, from the start."

"Money is no consideration with me, Captain Poke."

"Well, this is an idee that has brought many a more difficult contract at once into perigee, Sir John Goldencalf. Money is always a considerable consideration with me, and I may say, also, just now it is rather more so than usual. But when a gentleman clears the way as handsomely as you have now done, any bargain may be counted as a good deal more than half made."

A few explicit explanations disposed of this part of the subject, and Captain Poke accepted of my terms in the spirit of frankness with which they were made. Perhaps his decision was quickened by an offer of twenty napoleons, which I did not neglect making on the spot. Amicable and in some respects confidential relations were now established between my new acquaintance and myself; and we pursued our walk, discussing the details necessary to the execution of our project. After an hour or two passed in this manner, I invited my companion to go to my hotel, meaning that he should partake of my board until we could both depart for England, where it was my intention to purchase without delay a vessel for the

contemplated voyage, in which I also had decided to embark in person.

We were obliged to make our way through the throng that usually frequents the lower part of the Champs Elysees during the season of good weather and toward the close of the day. This task was nearly over when my attention was particularly drawn to a group that was just entering the place of general resort, apparently with the design of adding to the scene of thoughtlessness and amusement. But as I am now approaching the most material part of this extraordinary work, it will be proper to reserve the opening for a new chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN INTRODUCTION TO FOUR NEW CHARACTERS, SOME TOUCHES OF PHILOSOPHY, AND A FEW CAPITAL THOUGHTS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

THE group which drew my attention was composed of six individuals, two of which were animals of the genus *homo*, or what is vulgarly termed *man;* and the remainder were of the order *primates*, and of the class *mammalia;* or what in common parlance are called *monkeys*.

The first were Savoyards, and may be generally described as being *unwashed, ragged,* and *carnivorous;* in color *swarthy;* in lineaments and expression *avaricious* and *shrewd;* and in appetites *voracious*. The latter were of the common species, of the usual size, and of approved gravity. There were two of each sex; being very equally paired as to years and external advantages.

The monkeys were all habited with more or less of the ordinary attire of modern European civilization; but peculiar care had been taken with the toilet of the senior of the two males. This individual had on the coat of a hussar, a cut that would give a particular part of his body a more military *contour* than comported with his real character were it not for a red petticoat that was made shorter than common; less, however, with a view to show a pretty foot and ankle than to leave the nether limbs at liberty to go through with certain extravagant efforts which the Savoyards were unmercifully exacting from his natural agility. He wore a Spanish hat, decorated with a few bedraggled feathers, a white cockade, and a wooden sword. In addition to the latter, he carried in his hand a small broom.

Observing that my attention was strongly attracted to this party, the ill-favored Savoyards immediately commenced a series of experiments in saltation, with the sole view, beyond a question, to profit by my curiosity. The inoffensive victims of this act of brutal tryanny submitted with a patience worthy of the profoundest philosophy, meeting the wishes of their masters with a readiness and dexterity that was beyond all praise. One swept the earth, another leaped on the back of a dog, a third threw himself head over heels again and again without a murmur, and the fourth moved gracefully to and fro, like a young girl in a quadrille.

All this might have passed without calling for particular remark (since, alas! the spectacle is only too common), were it not for certain eloquent appeals that were made to me through the eyes by the individual in the hussar jacket. His look was rarely averted from my face for a moment, and in this way a silent communion was soon established between us. I observed that his gravity was indomitable. Nothing could elicit a smile or a change of countenance. Obedient to the whip of his brutal master, he never refused the required leap; for minutes at a time his legs and petticoats described confused circles in the air, appearing to have taken a final leave of the earth; but, the effort ended, he invariably descended to the ground with a quiet dignity and composure that showed how little the inward monkey partook of the antics of the outward animal. Drawing my companion a little aside, I ventured to suggest a few thoughts to him on the subject.

"Really, Captain Poke, it appears to

me there is great injustice in the treatment of these poor creatures!" I said. "What right have these two foul-looking blackguards to seize upon beings much more interesting to the eye, and, I daresay, far more intellectual than themselves, and cause them to throw their legs about in this extravagant manner, under the penalty of stripes, and without regard to their feelings or their convenience? I say, sir, the measure appears to me intolerably oppressive, and it calls for prompt redress."

"King!"

"King or subject, it does not alter the moral deformity of the act. What have these innocent beings done that they should be subject to this disgrace? Are they not flesh and blood like ourselves—do they not approach nearer to our form, and, for aught we know to the contrary, to our reason, than any other animal? and is it tolerable that our nearest imitations, our very cousins, should be thus dealt by? Are they dogs that they are treated like dogs?"

"Why, to my notion, Sir John, there isn't a dog on 'arth that can take such a somersault. Their flapjacks are quite extraor'nary!"

"Yes, sir, and more than extraordinary; they are oppressive. Place yourself, Mr. Poke, for a single instant, in the situation of one of these persons; fancy that you had a hussar jacket squeezed upon your brawny shoulders, a petticoat placed over your lower extremities, a Spanish hat with bedraggled feathers set upon your head, a wooden sword stuck at your side, and a broom put into your hand; and that these two Savoyards were to menace you with stripes unless you consented to throw somersaults for the amusement of strangers—I only ask you to make the case your own, sir, and then say what course you would take, and what you would do?"

"I would lick both of these young blackguards, Sir John, without remorse, break the sword and broom over their heads, kick their sensibilities till they couldn't see, and take my course for Stunin'tun, where I belong."

"Yes, sir, this might do with the Savoyards, who are young and feeble—"

"'Twouldn't alter the case much if two of these Frenchmen were in their places," put in the captain, glaring wolfishly about him. "To be plain with you, Sir John Goldencalf, being human, I'd submit to no such monkey tricks."

"Do not use the term reproachfully, Mr. Poke, I entreat of you. We call these animals monkeys, it is true; but we do not know what they call themselves. Man is merely an animal, and you must very well know—"

"Harkee, Sir John," interrupted the captain, "I'm no botanist, and do not pretend to more schooling than a sealer has need of for finding his way about the 'arth; but as for a man's being an animal, I just wish to ask you, now, if in your judgment a hog is also an animal?"

"Beyond a doubt—and fleas, and toads, and sea-serpents, and lizards, and water-devils—we are all neither more nor less than animals."

"Well, if a hog is an animal, I am willing to allow the relationship; for, in the course of my experience, which is not small, I have met with men that you might have mistaken for hogs in everything but the bristles, the snout, and the tail. I'll never deny what I've seen with my own eyes, though I suffer for it; and therefore I will admit that, hogs being animals, it is more than likely that some men must be animals too."

"We call these interesting beings monkeys; but how do we know that they do not return the compliment, and call us, in their own particular dialect, something quite as offensive? It would become our species to manifest a more equitable and philosophical spirit, and to consider these interesting strangers as an unfortunate family which has fallen into the hands of brutes, and which is in every way entitled to our commiseration and our active interference. Hitherto I have never sufficiently stimulated my sympathies for the animal world by any investment in quadrupeds; but it is my intention to write to-morrow to my English agent to purchase a pack of hounds and

a suitable stud of horses; and by way of quickening so laudable a resolution, I shall forthwith make propositions to the Savoyards for the speedy emancipation of this family of amiable foreigners. The slave-trade is an innocent pastime compared to the cruel oppression that the gentleman in the Spanish hat, in particular, is compelled to endure."

"King!"

"He may be a king, sure enough, in his own country, Captain Poke; a fact that would add tenfold agony to his unmerited sufferings."

Hereupon I proceeded without more ado to open a negotiation with the Savoyards. The judicious application of a few napoleons soon brought about a happy understanding between the contracting parties, when the Savoyards transferred to my hands the strings which confined their vassals, as the formal and usual acknowledgment of the right of ownership. Committing the three others to the keeping of Mr. Poke, I led the individual in the hussar jacket a little on one side, and, raising my hat to show that I was superior to the vulgar feelings of feudal superiority, I addressed him briefly in the following words:

"Although I have ostensibly bought the right which these Savoyards professed to have in your person and services, I seize an early occasion to inform you that virtually you are now free. As we are among a people accustomed to see your race in subjection, however, it may not be prudent to proclaim the nature of the present transaction, lest there might be some further conspiracies against your natural rights. We will retire to my hotel forthwith, therefore, where your future happiness shall be the subject of our more mature and of our united deliberations."

The respectable stranger in the hussar jacket heard me with inimitable gravity and self-command until, in the warmth of feeling, I raised an arm in earnest gesticulation, when, most probably overcome by the emotions of delight that were naturally awakened in his bosom by this sudden change in his fortune, he threw three somersaults, or flapjacks, as Captain Polk had quaintly designated his evolutions, in such rapid succession as to render it for a moment a matter of doubt whether nature had placed his head or his heels uppermost.

Making a sign for Captain Poke to follow, I now took my way directly to the Rue de Rivoli. We were attended by a constantly increasing crowd until the gate of the hotel was fairly entered; and glad was I to see my charge safely housed, for there were abundant indications of another design upon their rights in the taunts and ridicule of the living mass that rolled up as it were upon our heels. On reaching my own apartments a courier who had been waiting my return, and who had just arrived express from England, put a packet into my hands, stating that it came from my principal English agent. Hasty orders were given to attend to the comfort and wants of Captain Poke and the strangers (orders that were in no danger of being neglected, since Sir John Goldencalf, with the reputed annual revenue of three millions of francs, had unlimited credit with all the inhabitants of the hotel), and I hurried into my cabinet and sat down to the eager perusal of the different communications.

Alas! there was not a line from Anna! The obdurate girl still trifled with my misery; and in revenge I entertained a momentary resolution of adopting the notions of Mahmoud, in order to qualify myself to set up a harem.

The letters were from a variety of correspondents, embracing many of those who were intrusted with the care of my interests in very opposite quarters of the world. Half an hour before I had been dying to open more intimate relations with the interesting strangers; but my thoughts instantly took a new direction, and I soon found that the painful sentiments I had entertained touching their welfare and happiness were quite lost in the newly-awakened interests that lay before me. It is in this simple manner, no doubt, that the system to which I am a convert effects no small part of its own great purposes. No sooner does any one

interest grow painful by excess than a new claim arises to divert the thoughts, a new demand is made on the sensibilities; and by lowering our affections from the intensity of selfishness to the more bland and equable feeling of impartiality, forms that just and generous condition of the mind at which the political economists aim when they dilate on the glories and advantages of their favorite theory of the social stake.

In this happy frame of mind I fell to reading the letters with avidity, and with the godlike determination to reverence Providence and to do justice. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum!*

The first epistle was from the agent of the principal West India estate. He acquainted me with the fact that all hopes from the expected crop were destroyed by a hurricane, and he begged that I would furnish the means necessary to carry on the affairs of the plantation until another season might repair the loss. Priding myself on punctuality as a man of business, before I broke another seal a letter was written to a banker in London requesting him to supply the necessary credits, and to notify the agents in the West Indies of the circumstance. As he was a member of Parliament, I seized the occasion also to press upon him the necessity of Government's introducing some early measure for the protection of the sugar-growers, a most meritorious class of his fellow-subjects, and one whose exposures and actual losses called loudly for relief of this nature. As I closed the letter I could not help dwelling with complacency on the zeal and promptitude with which I had acted—the certain proof of the usefulness of the theory of investments.

The second communication was from the manager of an East India property, that very happily came with its offering to fill the vacuum left by the failure of the crops just mentioned. Sugar was likely to be a drug in the peninsula, and my correspondent stated that the cost of transportation being so much greater than from the other colonies, this advantage would be entirely lost unless the Government did something to restore the East Indian to his natural equality. I inclosed this letter in one to my Lord Say and Do, who was in the Ministry, asking him in the most laconic and pointed terms whether it were possible for the empire to prosper when one portion of it was left in possession of exclusive advantages, to the prejudice of all the others? As this question was put with a truly British spirit, I hope it had some tendency to open the eyes of his Majesty's Ministers; for much was shortly after said, both in the journals and in Parliament, on the necessity of protecting our East Indian fellow-subjects, and of doing natural justice by establishing the national prosperity on the only firm basis, that of free trade.

The next letter was from the acting partner of a large manufacturing house to which I had advanced quite half the capital, in order to enter into a sympathetic communion with the cotton-spinners. The writer complained heavily of the import duty on the raw material, made some poignant allusions to the increasing competition on the continent and in America, and pretty clearly intimated that the lord of the manor of Householder ought to make himself felt by the administration in a question of so much magnitude to the nation. On this hint I spake. I sat down on the spot and wrote a long letter to my friend Lord Pledge, in which I pointed out to him the danger that threatened our political economy; that we were imitating the false theories of the Americans (the countrymen of Captain Poke), that trade was clearly never so prosperous as when it was the most successful, that success depended on effort, and effort was the most efficient when the least encumbered, and in short that, as it was self-evident a man would jump further without being in foot-irons, or strike harder without being handcuffed, so it was equally apparent that a merchant would make a better bargain for himself when he could have things all his own way than when his enterprise and industry were shackled by the impertinent and selfish interposition of the interests of others. In conclusion there was an eloquent description of the demoralizing consequences

of smuggling, and a pungent attack on the tendencies of taxation in general. I have written and said some good things in my time, as several of my dependents have sworn to me in a way that even my natural modesty cannot repudiate; but I shall be excused for the weakness if I now add that I believe this letter to Lord Pledge contained some as clever points as anything I remembered in their way; the last paragraph in particular being positively the neatest and the best turned moral I ever produced.

Letter fourth was from the steward of the Householder estate. He spoke of the difficulty of getting the rents; a difficulty that he imputed altogether to the low price of corn. He said that it would soon be necessary to relet certain farms; and he feared that the unthinking cry against the corn-laws would affect the conditions. It was incumbent on the landed interest to keep an eye on the popular tendencies as respected this subject, for any material variation from the present system would lower the rental of all the grain-growing counties in England thirty per cent. at least at a blow. He concluded with a very hard rap at the agrarians, a party that was just coming a little into notice in Great Britain, and by a very ingenious turn, in which he completely demonstrated that the protection of the landlord and the support of the Protestant religion were indissolubly connected. There was also a vigorous appeal to the common sense of the subject on the danger to be apprehended by the people from themselves; which he treated in a way that, a little more expanded, would have made a delightful homily on the rights of man.

I believe I meditated on the contents of this letter fully an hour. Its writer, John Dobbs, was as worthy and upright a fellow as ever breathed; and I could not but admire the surprising knowledge of men which shone through every line he had indited. Something must be done, it was clear; and at length I determined to take the bull by the horns and to address Mr. Huskisson at once, as the shortest way of coming at the evil. He was the political sponsor for all the new notions on the subject of our foreign mercantile policy; and by laying before him in a strong point of view the fatal consequences of carrying his system to extremes, I hoped something might yet be done for the owners of real estate, the bones and sinews of the land.

I shall just add in this place that Mr. Huskisson sent me a very polite and a very statesman-like reply, in which he disclaimed any intention of meddling improperly with British interests in any way; that taxation was necessary to our system, and of course every nation was the best judge of its own means and resources; but that he merely aimed at the establishment of just and generous principles, by which nations that had no occasion for British measures should not unhandsomely resort to them; and that certain external truths should stand, like so many well-constructed tubs, each on its own bottom. I must say I was pleased with this attention from a man generally reputed as clever as Mr. Huskisson, and from that time I became a convert to most of his opinions.

The next communication that I opened was from the overseer of the estate in Louisiana, who informed me that the general aspect of things in that quarter of the world was favorable, but the small-pox had found its way among the negroes, and the business of the plantation would immediately require the services of fifteen able-bodied men, with the usual sprinkling of women and children. He added that the laws of America prohibited the further importation of blacks from any country without the limits of the Union, but that there was a very pretty and profitable internal trade in the article, and that the supply might be obtained in sufficient season either from the Carolinas, Virginia, or Maryland. He admitted, however, that there was some choice between the different stocks of these several States, and that some discretion might be necessary in making the selection. The negro of the Carolinas was the most used to the cotton field, had less occasion for clothes, and it had been proved

by experiment could be fattened on red herrings; while, on the other hand, the negro further north had the highest instinct, could sometimes reason, and that he had even been known to preach when he had got as high up as Philadelphia. He much affected, also, bacon and poultry. Perhaps it might be well to purchase samples of lots from all the different stocks in market.

In reply I assented to the latter idea, suggesting the expediency of getting one or two of the higher castes from the north; I had no objection to preaching provided they preached work; but I cautioned the overseer particularly against schismatics. Preaching, in the abstract, could do no harm; all depending on doctrine.

This advice was given as the result of much earnest observation. Those European states that had the most obstinately resisted the introduction of letters, I had recently had occasion to remark, were changing their systems, and were about to act on the principle of causing "fire to fight fire." They were fast having recourse to school-books, using no other precaution than the simple expedient of writing them themselves. By this ingenious invention poison was converted into food, and truths of all classes were at once put above the dangers of disputations and heresies.

Having disposed of the Louisianian, I very gladly turned to the opening of the sixth seal. The letter was from the efficient trustee of a company to whose funds I have largely contributed, by way of making an investment in charity. It had struck me, a short time previously to quitting home, that interests positive as most of those I had embarked in had a tendency to render the spirit worldly; and I saw no other check to such an evil than by seeking for some association with the saints, in order to set up a balance against the dangerous propensity. A lucky occasion offered through the wants of the Philo-African-anti-compulsion-free-labor Society, whose meritorious efforts were about to cease for the want of the great charity-power—gold. A draft for five thousand pounds had obtained me the honor of being advertised as a shareholder and a patron; and, I know not why!—but it certainly caused me to inquire into the results with far more interest than I had ever before felt in any similar institution. Perhaps this benevolent anxiety arose from that principle in our nature which induces us to look after whatever has been our own as long as any part of it can be seen.

The principal trustee of the Philo-African-anti-compulsion-free-labor society now wrote to state that some of the speculations which had gone *pari passu* with the charity had been successful, and that the shareholders were, by the fundamental provisions of the association, entitled to a dividend, but—how often that awkward word stands between the cup and the lip! —*but* that he was of opinion the establishment of a new factory near a point where the slavers most resorted, and where gold-dust and palm-oil were also to be had in the greatest quantities, and consequently at the lowest prices, would equally benefit trade and philanthropy; that by a judicious application of our means these two interests might be made to see-saw very cleverly, as cause and effect, effect and cause; that the black man would be spared an incalculable amount of misery, the white man a grievous burden of sin, and the particular agents of so manifest a good might quite reasonably calculate on making at the very least forty per cent per annum on their money, besides having all their souls saved in the bargain. Of course I assented to a proposition so reasonable in itself, and which offered benefits so plausible!

The next epistle was from the head of a great commercial house in Spain, in which I had taken some shares, and whose interests had been temporarily deranged by the throes of the people in their efforts to obtain redress for real or imaginary wrongs. My correspondent showed a proper indignation on the occasion, and was not sparing in his language whenever he was called to speak of popular tumults. "What do the wretches wish!" he asked with much point—"Our lives as well as our property? Ah! my dear sir, this bit-

ter fact impresses us all" (by us he meant the mercantile interests) "with the importance of strong executives. Where should we have been but for the bayonets of the King? or what would have become of our altars, our firesides, and our persons, had it not pleased God to grant us a monarch indomitable in will, brave in spirit, and quick in action?" I wrote a proper answer of congratulation and turned to the next epistle, which was the last of the communications.

The eighth letter was from the acting head of another commercial house in New York, United States of America, or the country of Captain Poke, where it would seem the President, by a decided exercise of his authority, had drawn upon himself the execrations of a large portion of the commercial interests of the country; since the effect of the measure, right or wrong, as a legitimate consequence, or not, by hook or by crook, had been to render money scarce. There is no man so keen in his philippics, so acute in discovering and so prompt in analyzing facts, so animated in his philosophy, and so eloquent in his complaints, as your debtor when money unexpectedly gets to be scarce. Credit, comfort, bones, sinews, marrow and all appear to depend on the result; and it is no wonder that, under so lively impressions, men who have hitherto been content to jog on in the regular and quiet habits of barter, should suddenly start up into logicians, politicians, ay, or even into magicians. Such had been the case with my present correspondent, who seemed to know and to care as little in general of the polity of his own country as if he had never been in it, but who now was ready to split hairs with a metaphysician, and who could not have written more complacently of the constitution if he had even read it. My limits will not allow an insertion of the whole letter, but one or two of its sentences shall be given. "Is it tolerable, my dear sir," he went on to say, "that the executive of *any* country, I will not say merely of our own, should possess, or exercise, even admitting that he does possess them, such unheard-of powers? Our condition is worse than that of the Mussulmans, who in losing their money usually lose their heads, and are left in a happy insensibility to their sufferings; but, alas! there is an end of the much boasted liberty of America! The executive has swallowed up all the other branches of the government, and the next thing will be to swallow up us. Our altars, our firesides, and our persons will shortly be invaded; and I much fear that my next letter will be received by you long after all correspondence shall be prohibited, every means of communication cut off, and we ourselves shall be precluded from writing, by being chained like beasts of burden to the car of a bloody tyrant." Then followed as pretty a string of epithets as I remember to have heard from the mouth of the veriest shrew at Billingsgate.

I could not but admire the virtue of the "social-stake system," which kept men so sensibly alive to all their rights, let them live where they would, or under what form of government, which was so admirably suited to sustain truth and render us just. In reply I sent back epithet for epithet, echoed all the groans of my correspondent, and railed as became a man who was connected with a losing concern.

This closed my correspondence for the present, and I arose wearied with my labors, and yet greatly rejoicing in their fruits. It was now late, but excitement prevented sleep; and before retiring for the night I could not help looking in upon my guests. Captain Poke had gone to a room in another part of the hotel, but the family of amiable strangers were fast asleep in the antechamber. They had supped heartily, as I was assured, and were now indulging in a happy but temporary oblivion—to use an improved expression—of all their wrongs. Satisfied with this state of things, I now sought my own pillow, or, according to a favorite phrase of Mr. Noah Poke, I also "turned in."

CHAPTER IX.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF WONDERS, WHICH ARE THE MORE EXTRAORDINARY ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR TRUTH.

I DARE say my head had been on the pillow fully an hour before sleep closed my eyes. During this time I had abundant occasion to understand the activity of what are called the "busy thoughts." Mine were feverish, glowing, and restless. They wandered over a wide field; one that included Anna, with her beauty, her mild truth, her womanly softness, and her womanly cruelty; Captain Poke and his peculiar opinions; the amiable family of quadrupeds and their wounded sensibilities; the excellences of the social-stake system; and, in short, most of that which I had seen and heard during the last four-and-twenty hours. When sleep did tardily arrive, it overtook me at the very moment that I had inwardly vowed to forget my heartless mistress, and to devote the remainder of my life to the promulgation of the doctrine of the expansive-superhuman-generalized-affection principle, to the utter exclusion of all narrow and selfish views, and in which I resolved to associate myself with Mr. Poke, as with one who had seen a great deal of this earth and its inhabitants, without narrowing down his sympathies in favor of any one place or person in particular, Stunin'tun and himself very properly excepted.

It was broad daylight when I awoke on the following morning. My spirits were calmed by rest, and my nerves had been soothed by the balmy freshness of the atmosphere. It appeared that my valet had entered and admitted the morning air, and then had withdrawn as usual to await the signal of the bell before he presumed to reappear. I lay many minutes in delicious repose, enjoying the periodical return of life and reason, bringing with it the pleasures of thought and its ten thousand agreeable associations. The delightful reverie into which I was insensibly dropping was, however, ere long arrested by low, murmuring, and, as I thought, plaintive voices at no great distance from my own bed. Seating myself erect, I listened intently and with a good deal of surprise; for it was not easy to imagine whence sounds so unusual for that place and hour could proceed.

The discourse was earnest and even animated; but it was carried on in so low a tone that it would have been utterly inaudible but for the deep quiet of the hotel. Occasionally a word reached my ears, and I was completely at fault in endeavoring to ascertain even the language. That it was in neither of the five great European tongues I was certain, for all these I either spoke or read; and there were particular sounds and inflections that induced me to think that it savored of the most ancient of the two classics. It is true that the prosody of these dialects, at the same time that it is a shibboleth of learning, is a disputed point, the very sounds of the vowels even being a matter of national convention; the Latin word *dux*, for instance, becoming *ducks* in England, *dooks* in Italy, and *dukes* in France; yet there is a *"je ne sais quoi,"* a delicacy in the auricular taste of a true scholar that will rarely lead him astray when his ears are greeted with words that have been used by Demosthenes and Cicero.* In the present instance, I distinctly heard the word *my-bom-y-nos-fos-kom-i-ton*, which I made sure was a verb in the dual number and second person, of a Greek root, but of a signification that I could not on the instant master, but which beyond a question every scholar will recognize as having a strong analogy to a well-known line in Homer. If I was puzzled with the syllables that accidentally reached me, I was no less perplexed with the intonations of the voices of the different speakers. While it was easy to understand they were of the two sexes, they had no direct affinity to the mumbling sibilations of the English, the vehement monotony of the French, the gagging sonorousness of the Spaniards, the noisy melody of the Italians, the earsplitting octaves of the Germans, or the

* Or Chickero, or Kickero, whichever may happen to suit the prejudices of the reader.

undulating head-over-heels enunciation of the countrymen of my particular acquaintance, Captain Noah Poke. Of all the living languages of which I had any knowledge, the resemblance was nearer to the Danish and Swedish than to any other; but I much doubted at the time I first heard the syllables, and still question, if there is exactly such a word as *my-bom-y-nos-fos-kom-i-ton* to be found in even either of those tongues. I could no longer support the suspense. The classical and learned doubts that beset me grew intensely painful; and arising with the greatest caution, in order not to alarm the speakers, I prepared to put an end to them all by the simple and natural process of actual observation.

The voices came from the antechamber, the door of which was slightly open. Throwing on a dressing-gown, and thrusting my feet into slippers, I moved on tiptoe to the aperture, and placed my eye in such a situation as enabled me to command a view of the persons of those who were still earnestly talking in an adjoining room. All surprise vanished the moment I found that the four monkeys were grouped in a corner of the apartment, where they were carrying on a very animated dialogue, the two eldest of the party (a male and a female) being the principal speakers. It was not to be expected that even a graduate of Oxford, although belonging to a sect so proverbial for classical lore that many of them knew nothing else, could at the first hearing decide upon the analogies and character of a tongue that is so little cultivated even in that ancient seat of learning. Although I had now certainly a direct clew to the root of the dialect of the speakers, I found it quite impossible to get any useful acquaintance with the general drift of what was passing among them. As they were my guests, however, and might possibly be in want of some of the conveniences that were necessary to their habits, or might even be suffering under still graver embarrassments, I conceived it to be a duty to waive the ordinary usages of society, and at once offer whatever it was in my power to bestow, at the risk of interrupting concerns that they might possibly wish to consider private. Using the precaution, therefore, to make a little noise, as the best means of announcing my approach, the door was gently opened, and I presented myself to view. At first I was a little at a loss in what manner to address the strangers; but believing that a people who spoke a language so difficult of utterance and so rich as that I had just heard, like those who use dialects derived from the Slavonian roots, were most probably the masters of all others; and remembering, moreover, that French was a medium of thought among all polite people, I determined to have recourse to that tongue.

"*Messieurs et mesdames,*" I said, inclining my body in salutation, "*mille pardons pour cette intrusion peu convenable*"—but as I am writing in English it may be well to translate the speeches as I proceed; although I abandon with regret the advantage of going through them literally, and in the appropriate dialect in which they were originally spoken.

"Gentlemen and ladies," I said, inclining my body in salutation, "I ask a thousand pardons for this inopportune intrusion on your retirement; but overhearing a few of what I much fear are but too well-grounded complaints touching the false position in which you are placed as the occupants of this apartment, and in that light your host, I have ventured to approach, with no other desire than the wish that you would make me the repository of all your griefs, in order, if possible, that they may be repaired as soon as circumstances shall in any manner allow."

The strangers were very naturally a little startled at my unexpected appearance, and at the substance of what I had just said. I observed that the two ladies were apparently in some slight degree even distressed, the younger turning her head on one side in maiden modesty, while the elder, a duenna-sort-of-looking person, dropped her eyes to the floor, but succeeded in better maintaining her self-possession and gravity. The elder of the

two gentlemen approached me with dignified composure, after a moment of hesitation, and returning my salute by waving his tail with singular grace and decorum, he answered as follows. I may as well state in this place that he spoke the French about as well as an Englishman who has lived long enough on the continent to fancy he can travel in the provinces without being detected for a foreigner. *Au reste*, his accent was slightly Russian, and his enunciation whistling and harmonious. The females, especially in some of the lower keys of their voices, made sounds not unlike the sighing tones of the Æolian harp. It was really a pleasure to hear them; but I have often had occasion to remark that, in every country but one, which I do not care to name, the language when uttered by the softer sex takes new charms, and is rendered more delightful to the ear.

"Sir," said the stranger, when he had done waving his tail, "I should do great injustice to my feelings, and to the monikin character in general, were I to neglect expressing some small portion of the gratitude I feel on the present occasion. Destitute, houseless, insulted wanderers and captives, fortune has at length shed a ray of happiness on our miserable condition, and hope begins to shine through the cloud of our distress, like a passing gleam of the sun. From my very tail, sir, in my own name, and in that of this excellent and most prudent matron, and in those of these two noble and youthful lovers, I thank you. Yes! honorable and humane being of the genus *homo*, species *Anglicus*, we all return our most tail-felt acknowledgments of your goodness!"

Here the whole party gracefully bent the ornaments in question over their heads, touching their receding foreheads with the several tips, and bowed. I would have given ten thousand pounds at that moment to have had a good investment in tails, in order to emulate their form of courtesy; but naked, shorn, and destitute as I was, with a feeling of humility, I was obliged to put my head a little on one shoulder and give the ordinary English bob, in return for their more elaborate politeness.

"If I were merely to say, sir," I continued, when the opening salutations were thus properly exchanged, "that I am charmed at this accidental interview, the word would prove very insufficient to express my delight. Consider this hotel as your own; its domestics as your domestics; its stores of condiments as your stores of condiments, and its nominal tenant as your most humble servant and friend. I have been greatly shocked at the indignities to which you have hitherto been exposed, and now promise you liberty, kindness, and all those attentions to which it is very apparent you are fully entitled by your birth, breeding, and the delicacy of your sentiments. I congratulate myself a thousand times for having been so fortunate as to make your acquaintance. My greatest desire has always been to stimulate the sympathies; but until to-day various accidents have confined the cultivation of this heaven-born property in a great measure to my own species; I now look forward, however, to a delicious career of new-born interests in the whole of the animal creation, I need scarcely say in that of quadrupeds of your family in particular."

"Whether we belong to the class of quadrupeds or not is a question that has a good deal embarrassed our own *savans*," returned the stranger. "There is an ambiguity in our physical action that renders the point a little questionable; and therefore, I think, the higher castes of our natural philosophers rather prefer classing the entire monikin species, with all its varieties, as caudæ-jactans, or tail-wavers; adopting the term from the nobler part of the animal formation. Is not this the better opinion at home, my Lord Chatterino?" he asked, turning to the youth, who stood respectfully at his side.

"Such, I believe, my dear doctor, was the last classification sanctioned by the academy," the young noble replied, with a readiness that proved him to be both well-informed and intelligent, and at the same time with a reserve of manner that did equal credit to his modesty and breeding. "The question of whether we are

or are not bipeds has greatly agitated the schools for more than three centuries."

"The use of this gentleman's name," I hastily rejoined, "my dear sir, reminds me that we are but half acquainted with each other. Permit me to waive ceremony, and to announce myself at once as Sir John Goldencalf, Baronet, of Householder Hall, in the kingdom of Great Britain, a poor admirer of excellence wherever it is to be found, or under whatever form, and a devotee of the system of the 'social state.'"

"I am happy to be admitted to the honor of this formal introduction, Sir John. In return I beg you will suffer me to say that this young nobleman is, in our own dialect, No. 6, purple; or to translate the appellation, my Lord Chatterino. This young lady is No. 4, violet, or my Lady Chatterissa. This excellent and prudent matron is No. 4,626,243, russet, or, Mistress Vigilance Lynx, to translate her appellation also into the English tongue; and that I am No. 22,817, brown-study color, or, Dr. Reasono, to give you a literal signification of my name—a poor disciple of the philosophers of our race, an LL.D., and a F. U. D. G. E., the traveling tutor of this heir of one of the most illustrious and the most ancient houses of the island of Leaphigh, in the monikin section of mortality."

"Every syllable, learned Dr. Reasono, that falls from your revered lips only whets curiosity and adds fuel to the flame of desire, tempting me to inquire further into your private history, your future intentions, the policy of your species, and all those interesting topics that will readily suggest themselves to one of your quick apprehensions and extensive acquirements. I dread being thought indiscreet; and yet, putting yourself in my position, I trust you will overlook a wish so natural and so ardent."

"Apology is unnecessary, Sir John, and nothing would afford me greater satisfaction than to answer any and every inquiry you may be disposed to make."

"Then, sir, to cut short all useless circumlocution, suffer me to ask at once an explanation of the system of enumeration by which you indicate individuals? You are called No. 22,817, brown-study color—"

"Or Dr. Reasono. As you are an Englishman, you will perhaps understand me better if I refer to a recent practice of the new London police. You may have observed that the men wear letters in red or white, and numbers on the capes of their coats. By the letters the passenger can refer to the company of the officer, while the number indicates the individual. Now the idea of this improvement came, I make no doubt, from our system, under which society is divided into castes, for the sake of harmony and subordination, and these castes are designated by colors and shades of color that are significant of their stations and pursuits—the individual, as in the new police, being known by the number. Our own language, being exceedingly sententious, is capable of expressing the most elaborate of these combinations in a very few sounds. I should add that there is no difference in the manner of distinguishing the sexes, with the exception that each is numbered apart, and each has a counterpart color to that of the same caste in the other sex. Thus purple and violet are both noble, the former being masculine and the latter feminine, and russet being the counterpart of brown-study color."

"And—excuse my natural ardor to know more—and do you bear these numbers and colors marked on your attire in your own region?"

"As for attire, Sir John, the monikins are too highly improved, mentally and physically, to need any. It is known that in all cases extremes meet. The savage is nearer to nature than the merely civilized being, and the creature that has passed the mystifications of a middle state of improvement finds himself again approaching nearer to the habits, the wishes, and the opinions of our common mother. As the real gentleman is more simple in manners than the distant imitator of his deportment; as fashions and habits are always more exaggerated in provincial towns than in polished capitals; or as the profound philosopher has less pretensions than the tyro, so does our

common genus, as it draws nearer to the consummation of its destiny and its highest attainments, learn to reject the most valued usages of the middle condition, and to return with ardor toward nature as to a first love. It is on this principle, sir, that the monikin family never wear clothes."

"I could not but perceive that the ladies have manifested some embarrassment ever since I entered—is it possible that their delicacy has taken the alarm at the state of my toilet?"

"At the toilet itself, Sir John, rather than at its state, if I must speak plainly. The female mind, trained as it is with us from infancy upward in the habits and usages of nature, is shocked by any departure from her rules. You will know how to make allowances for the squeamishness of the sex, for I believe it is much alike in this particular, let it come from what quarter of the earth it may."

"I can only excuse the seeming want of politeness by my ignorance, Dr. Reasono. Before I ask another question the oversight shall be repaired. I must retire into my own chamber for an instant, gentlemen and ladies, and I beg you will find such sources of amusement as first offer until I can return. There are nuts, I believe, in this closet; sugar is usually kept on that table, and perhaps the ladies might find some relaxation by exercising themselves on the chairs. In a single moment I shall be with you again."

Hereupon I withdrew into my bedchamber, and began to lay aside the dressing-gown as well as my shirt. Remembering, however, that I was but too liable to colds in the head, I returned to ask Dr. Reasono to step in where I was for an instant. On mentioning the difficulty, this excellent person assumed the office of preparing his female friends to overlook the slight innovation of my still wearing the nightcap and slippers.

"The ladies would think nothing of it," the philosopher good-humoredly remarked, by way of lessening my regrets at having wounded their sensibilities, "were you even to appear in a military cloak and Hessian boots, provided it was not thought that you were of their acquaintance and in their immediate society. I think you must have often remarked among the sex of your own species, who are frequently quite indifferent to nudities (their prejudices running counter to ours) that appear in the streets, but which would cause them instantly to run out of the room when exhibited in the person of an acquaintance; these conventional asides being tolerated everywhere by a judicious concession of punctilios that might otherwise become insupportable."

"The distinction is too reasonable to require another word of explanation, dear sir. Now let us rejoin the ladies, since I am at length in some degree fit to be seen."

I was rewarded for this bit of delicate attention by an approving smile from the lovely Chatterissa, and good Mistress Lynx no longer kept her eyes riveted on the floor, but bent them on me with looks of admiration and gratitude.

"Now that this little *contretemps* is no longer an obstacle," I resumed, "permit me to continue these inquiries which you have hitherto answered with so much amenity and so satisfactorily. As you have no clothes, in what manner is the parallel between your usage and that of the new London police practically completed?"

"Although we have no clothes, nature, whose laws are never violated with impunity, but who is as beneficent as she is absolute, has furnished us with a downy covering to supply their places wherever clothes are needed for comfort. We have coats that defy fashions, require no tailors, and never lose their naps. But it would be inconvenient to be totally clad in this manner; and, therefore, the palms of the hands are, as you see, ungloved; the portions of the frame on which we seat ourselves are left uncovered, most probably lest some inconvenience should arise from taking accidental and unfavorable positions. This is the part of the monikin frame the best adapted for receiving paint, and the numbers of which I have spoken are periodically renewed there, at public offices appointed for that purpose. Our

characters are so minute as to escape the human eye; but by using that opera-glass, I make no doubt that you may still see some of my own enregistration, although, alas! unusual friction, great misery, and I may say, unmerited wrongs, have nearly un-monikined me in this, as well as in various other particulars."

As Dr. Reasono had the complaisance to turn round, and to use his tail like the index of a blackboard, by aid of the glass I very distinctly traced the figures to which he alluded. Instead of being in paint, however, as he had given me reason to anticipate, they seemed to be branded, or burnt in, indelibly, as we commonly mark horses, thieves, and negroes. On mentioning the fact to the philosopher, it was explained with his usual facility and politeness.

"You are quite right, sir," he said; "the omission of paint was to prevent tautology, an offense against the simplicity of the monikin dialect, as well as against monikin taste, that would have been sufficient, under our opinions, even to overturn the government."

"Tautology!"

"Tautology, Sir John; on examining the background of the picture, you will perceive that it is already of a dusky, somber hue; now this, being of a meditative and grave character, has been denominated by our academy the 'brown-study color;' and it would clearly have been supererogatory to lay the same tint upon it. No, sir; we avoid repetitions even in our prayers, deeming them to be so many proofs of an illogical and of an anti-consecutive mind."

"The system is admirable, and I see new beauties at each moment. You enjoy the advantage, for instance, under this mode of enumeration, of knowing your acquaintances from behind, quite as well as if you met them face to face!"

"The suggestion is ingenious, showing an active and observant mind; but it does not quite reach the motive of the politico-numerical-identity system of which we are speaking. The objects of this arrangement are altogether of a higher and more useful nature; nor do we usually recognize our friends by their countenances, which at the best are no more than so many false signals, but by their tails."

"This is admirable! What a facility you possess for recognizing an acquaintance who may happen to be up a tree! But may I presume to inquire, Dr. Reasono, what are the most approved of the advantages of the politico-numerical-identity system? For impatience is devouring my vitals."

"They are connected with the interests of government. You know, sir, that society is established for the purposes of governments, and governments, themselves, mainly to facilitate contributions and taxations. Now, by the numerical system, we have every opportunity of including the whole monikin race in the collections, as they are periodically checked off by their numbers. The idea was a happy thought of an eminent statistician of ours, who gained great credit at Court by the invention, and, in fact, who was admitted to the academy in consequence of its ingenuity.

"Still it must be admitted, my dear Doctor," put in Lord Chatterino, always with the modesty and, perhaps I might add, with the generosity of youth, "that there are some among us who deny that society was made for governments, and who maintain that governments were made for society; or, in other words, for monikins."

"Mere theorists, my good lord; and their opinions, even if true, are never practiced on. Practice is everything in political matters; and theories are of no use, except as they confirm practice."

"Both theory and practice are perfect," I cried, "and I make no doubt that the classification into colors, or castes, enables the authorities to commence the imposts with the richest, or the 'purples.'"

"Sir, monikin prudence never lays the foundation-stone at the summit; it seeks the base of the edifice, and as contributions are the walls of society, we commence at the bottom. When you shall know us better, Sir John Goldencalf, you will begin to comprehend the beauty and

benevolence of the entire monikin economy."

I now adverted to the frequent use of this word "monikin"; and, admitting my ignorance, desired an explanation of the term, as well as a more general insight into the origin, history, hopes, and polity of the interesting strangers; if they can be so called who were already so well known to me. Dr. Reasono admitted that the request was natural and was entitled to respect; but he delicately suggested the necessity of sustaining the animal function by nutriment, intimating that the ladies had supped but in an indifferent way the evening before, and acknowledging that, philosopher as he was, he should go through the desired explanations after improving the slight acquaintance he had already made with certain condiments in one of the *armoires*, with far more zeal and point than could possibly be done in the present state of his appetite. The suggestion was so very plausible that there was no resisting it; and, suppressing my curiosity as well as I could, the bell was rung. I retired to my bedchamber to resume so much of my attire as was necessary to the semi-civilization of man, and then the necessary orders were given to the domestics, who, by the way, were suffered to remain under the influences of those ordinary and vulgar prejudices that are pretty generally entertained by the human against the monikin family.

Previously to separating from my new friend, Dr. Reasono, however, I took him aside, and stated that I had an acquaintance in the hotel, a person of singular philosophy, after the human fashion, and a great traveler; and that I desired permission to let him into the secret of our intended lecture on the monikin economy, and to bring him with me as an auditor. To this request, No. 22,817, brown-study color, or Dr. Reasono, gave a very cordial assent; hinting delicately, at the same time, his expectation that this new auditor, who, of course, was no other than Captain Noah Poke, would not deem it disparaging to his manhood to consult the sensibilities of the ladies by appearing in the garments of that only decent and respectable tailor and draper, nature. To this suggestion I gave a ready approval; when each went his way, after the usual salutations of bowing and tail-waving, with a mutual promise of being punctual to the appointment.

CHAPTER X.

A GREAT DEAL OF NEGOTIATION, IN WHICH HUMAN SHREWDNESS IS COMPLETELY SHAMED, AND HUMAN INGENUITY IS SHOWN TO BE OF A VERY SECONDARY QUALITY.

MR. POKE listened to my account of all that had passed with a very sedate gravity. He informed me that he had witnessed so much ingenuity among the seals, and had known so many brutes that seemed to have the sagacity of men, and so many men who appeared to have the stupidity of brutes, that he had no difficulty whatever in believing every word I told him. He expressed his satisfaction, too, at the prospect of hearing a lecture on natural philosophy and political economy from the lips of a monkey; although he took occasion to intimate that no desire to learn anything lay at the bottom of his compliance; for, in his country, these matters were pretty generally studied in the district schools, the very children who ran about the streets of "Stunnin'tun" usually knowing more than most of the old people in foreign parts. "Still, a monkey might have some new ideas; and for his part, he was willing to hear what every one had to say; for, if a man didn't put in a word for himself, in this world, he might be certain no one else would take the pains to speak for him." But when I came to mention the details of the *programme* of the forthcoming interview, and stated that it was expected the audience would wear their own skins, out of respect to the ladies, I greatly feared that my friend would have so far excited himself as to go into fits.

The rough old sealer swore some terrible

oaths, protesting "that he would not make a monkey of himself, by appearing in this garb, for all the monikin philosophers, or high-born females, that could be stowed in a ship's hold; that he was very liable to take cold; that he once knew a man who undertook to play beast in this manner, and the first thing the poor devil knew he had great claws and a tail sprouting out of him; a circumstance that he had always attributed to a just judgment for striving to make himself more than Providence had intended him for; that, providing a man's ears were naked, he would hear just as well as if his whole body was naked; that he did not complain of monkeys going in their skins, and that they ought, in reason, not to meddle with his clothes; that he should be scratching himself the whole time, and thinking what a miserable figure he cut; that he would have no place to keep his tobacco; that he was apt to be deaf when he was cold; that he would be d——d if he did any such thing; that human natur' and monkey natur' were not the same, and it was not to be expected that men and monkeys should follow exactly the same fashions; that the meeting would have the appearance of a boxing-match, instead of a philosophical lecture; that he never head of such a thing at Stunnin'tun; that he should feel sneaking at seeing his own shins in the presence of ladies; that a ship always made better weather under some canvas than under bare poles; that he might possibly be brought to his shirt and pantaloons, but as for giving up these, he would as soon think of cutting the sheet anchor off his bows, with the vessel driving on a lee-shore; that flesh and blood were flesh and blood, and they liked their comfort; that he should think the whole time that he was about to go in swimming, and should be looking about for a good place to dive;" together with a great many more similar objections, that have escaped me in the multitude of things of greater interest which have since occupied my time. I have frequently had occasion to observe, that, when a man has one good, solid reason for his decision, it is no easy matter to shake it; but that he who has a great many, usually finds them of far less account in the struggle of opinions. Such proved to be the fact with Captain Poke on the present occasion. I succeeded in stripping him of his garments, one by one, until I got him reduced to the shirt, where, like a stout ship that it is easily brought to her bearings by the breeze, he "stuck and hung" in a manner to manifest it would require a heavy strain to bring him down any lower.

A lucky thought relieved us all from the dilemma. There were a couple of good large bison-skins among my effects, and on suggesting to Dr. Reasono the expediency of encasing Captain Polk in the folds of one of them, the philosopher cheerfully assented, observing that any object of a *natural* and *simple* formation was agreeable to the monikin senses; their objections were merely to the deformities of art, which they deemed to be so many offenses against Providence. On this explanation I ventured to hint that, being still in the infancy of the new civilization, it would be very agreeable to my ancient habits, could I be permitted to use one of the skins, also, while Mr. Poke occupied the other. Not the slightest objection was raised to the proposal, and measures were immediately taken to prepare us to appear in good company. Soon after I received from Dr. Reasono a *protocol* of the conditions that were to regulate the approaching interview. This document was written in Latin, out of respect to the ancients, and as I afterwards understood, it was drawn up by my Lord Chatterino, who had been educated for the diplomatic career at home, previously to the accident which had thrown him, alas! into human hands. I translate it freely, for the benefit of the ladies, who usually prefer their own tongues to any other.

PROTOCOL of an interview that is to take place between Sir John Goldencalf, Bart., of Householder Hall, in the kingdom of Great Britain, and No. 22,817, brown-study color, or Socrates Reasono, F. U. D. G. E., Professor of Probabilities in the University of Monikinia, and in the kingdom of Leaphigh:

The contracting parties agree as follows, viz.:

ARTICLE 1. That there shall be an interview.

ART. 2. That the said interview shall be a peaceable interview, and not a belligerent interview.

ART. 3. That the said interview shall be logical, explanatory, and discursory.

ART. 4. That during said interview, Dr. Reasono shall have the privilege of speaking most, and Sir John Goldencalf the privilege of hearing most.

ART. 5. That Sir John Goldencalf shall have the privilege of asking questions, and Dr. Reasono the privilege of answering them.

ART. 6. That a due regard shall be had to both human and monikin prejudices and sensibilities.

ART. 7. That Dr. Reasono, and any monikins who may accompany him, shall smooth their coats, and otherwise dispose of their natural vestments, in a way that shall be as agreeable as possible to Sir John Goldencalf and his friend.

ART. 8. That Sir John Goldencalf, and any man who may accompany him, shall appear in bison-skins, wearing no other clothing, in order to render themselves as agreeable as possible to Dr. Reasono and his friends.

ART. 9. That the conditions of this *protocol* shall be respected.

ART. 10. That any doubtful significations in this *protocol* shall be interpreted, as near as may be, in favor of both parties.

ART. 11. That no precedent shall be established to the prejudice of either the human or the monikin dialect, by the adoption of the Latin language on this occasion.

Delighted with this proof of attention on the part of my Lord Chatterino, I immediately left a card for that young nobleman, and then seriously set about preparing myself, with an increased scrupulousness, for the fulfillment of the smallest condition of the compact. Captain Poke was soon ready, and I must say that he looked more like a quadruped on his hind legs, in his new attire, than a human being. As for my own appearance, I trust it was such as became my station and character.

At the appointed time all the parties were assembled, Lord Chatterino appearing with a copy of the *protocol* in his hand. This instrument was formally read, by the young peer, in a very creditable manner, when a silence ensued, as if to invite comment. I know not how it is, but I never yet heard the positive stipulations of any bargain, that I did not feel a propensity to look out for weak places in them. I had begun to see that the discussion might lead to argument, argument to comparisions between the two species, and something like an *esprit de corps* was stirring within me. It now struck me that a question might be fairly raised as to the propriety of Dr. Reasono's appearing with *three* backers, while I had but *one*. The objection was therefore urged on my part, I hope, in a modest and conciliatory manner. In reply, my Lord Chatterino observed, it was true the *proctocol* spoke in general terms of mutual supporters, but if—

"Sir John Goldencalf would be at the trouble of referring to the instrument itself, he would see that the backers of Dr. Reasono were mentioned in the *plural* number, while that of Sir John himself was alluded to only in the *singular* number."

"Perfectly true, my lord; but you will, however, permit me to remark, that *two* monikins would completely fulfill the conditions in favor of Dr. Reasono, while he appears here with *three;* there certainly must be some limits to this plurality, or the doctor would have a right to attend the interview accompanied by all the inhabitants of Leaphigh."

"The objection is highly ingenious, and creditable in the last degree to the diplomatic abilities of Sir John Goldencalf, but, among monikins, two *females* are deemed equal to only one male, in the eye of the law. Thus, in cases which require two witnesses, as in conveyances of real estate, two *male* monikins are sufficient, whereas it would be necessary to have *four female* signatures, in order to give

the instrument validity. In the legal sense, therefore, I conceive that Dr. Reasono is attended by only *two* monikins."

Captain Poke hereupon observed that this provision in the law of Leaphigh was a good one; for he often had occasion to remark that women, quite half the time, did not know what they were about; and he thought, in general, that they require more ballast than men.

"This reply would completely cover the case, my lord," I answered; "were the *protocol* purely a monikin document, and this assembly purely a monikin assembly. But the facts are notoriously otherwise. The document is drawn up in a common vehicle of thought among scholars, and I gladly seized the opportunity to add, that I do not remember to have seen a better specimen of modern latinity."

"It is undeniable, Sir John," returned Lord Chatterino, waving his tail in acknowledgment of the compliment, "that the *protocol* itself is in a language that has now become common property; but the mere medium of thought, on such occasions, is of no great moment, provided it is neutral as respects the contracting parties; moreover, in this particular case, article 11th of the *protocol* contains a stipulation that no legal consequences whatever are to follow the use of the Latin language; a stipulation that leaves the contracting parties in possession of their original rights. Now as the lecture is to be a monikin lecture, given by a monikin philosopher, and on monikin grounds, I humbly urge that it is proper the interview should generally be conducted on monikin principles."

"If by monikin grounds, is meant monikin ground (which I have a right to assume, since the greater necessarily includes the less), I beg leave to remind your lordship that the parties are, at this moment, in a neutral country, and that if either of them can set up a claim of territorial jurisdiction, or the rights of the flag, these claims must be admitted to be human, since the *locataire* of this apartment is a man, in control of the *locus in quo*, and *pro hac vice*, the suzerain."

"Your ingenuity has greatly exceeded my construction, Sir John, and I beg leave to amend my plea. All I mean is, that the leading consideration in this interview is a monikin interest—that we are met to propound, explain, digest, animadvert on, and embellish a monikin theme—that the accessory must be secondary to the principal—that the lesser must merge, not in your sense, but in my sense, in the greater, and, by consequence, that—"

"You will accord me your pardon, my dear lord, but I hold—"

"Nay, my good Sir John, I trust to your intelligence to be excused if I say—"

"One word, my Lord Chatterino, I pray you, in order that—"

"A thousand, very cheerfully, Sir John, but—"

"My Lord Chatterino!"

"Sir John Goldencalf!"

Hereupon we both began talking at the same time, the noble young monikin gradually narrowing down the direction of his observations to the single person of Mrs. Vigilance Lynx, who I afterward had occasion to know, was an excellent listener; and I, in my turn, after wandering from eye to eye, settled down into a sort of oration that was especially addressed to the understanding of Captain Noah Poke. My auditor contrived to get one ear entirely clear of the bison's skin, and nodded approbation of what fell from me, with a proper degree of human and clannish spirit. We might possibly have harangued in this desultory manner to the present time, had not the amiable Chatterissa advanced, and, with the tact and delicacy which distinguish her sex, by placing her pretty *patte* on the mouth of the young nobleman, effectually checked his volubility. When a horse is running away, he usually comes to a dead stop, after driving through lanes, and gates, and turnpikes, the moment he finds himself master of his own movements in an open field. Thus, in my own case, no sooner did I find myself in sole possession of the argument, than I brought it to a close. Dr. Reasono improved the pause, to introduce a proposition that, the experiment already made by myself and Lord Chat-

terino being evidently a failure, he and Mr. Poke should retire and make an effort to agree upon an entirely new *programme* of the proceedings. This happy thought suddenly restored peace; and while the two negotiators were absent, I improved the opportunity to become better acquainted with the lovely Chatterissa and her female Mentor. Lord Chatterino, who possessed all the graces of diplomacy, who could turn from a hot and angry discussion on the instant, to the most bland and winning courtesy, was foremost in promoting my wishes, inducing his charming mistress to throw aside the reserve of a short acquaintance, and to enter, at once, into a free and friendly discourse.

Some time elapsed before the plenipotentiaries returned; for it appears that, owing to a constitutional peculiarity, or, as he subsequently explained it himself, a "Stunnin'tun principle," Captain Poke conceived he was bound, in a bargain, to dispute every proposition which came from the other party. This difficulty would probably have proved insuperable, had not Dr. Reasono luckily bethought him of a frank and liberal proposal to leave every other article, without reserve, to the sole dictation of his colleague, reserving to himself the same privilege for all the rest. Noah, after being well assured that the philosopher was no lawyer, assented; and the affair, once begun in this spirit of concession, was soon brought to a close. And here I would recommend this happy expedient to all negotiators of knotty and embarrasssing treaties, since it enables each party to gain his point, and probably leaves as few openings for subsequent disputes as any other mode that has yet been adopted. The new instrument ran as follows, it having been written, in duplicate, in English, and in Monikin. It will be seen that the pertinacity of one of the negotiators gave it very much the character of a capitulation.

PROTOCOL of an interview, etc., etc., etc.

The contracting parties agree as follows, viz.:

ARTICLE 1. There shall be an interview.

ART. 2. Agreed; provided all the parties can come and go at pleasure.

ART. 3. The said interview shall be conducted generally, on philosophical and liberal principles.

ART. 4. Agreed; provided tobacco may be used at discretion.

ART. 5. That either party shall have the privilege of propounding questions, and either party the privilege of answering them.

ART. 6. Agreed; provided no one need listen, or no one talk, unless so disposed.

ART. 7. The attire of all present shall be conformable to the abstract rules of propriety and decorum.

ART. 8. Agreed; provided the bison-skins may be reefed, from time to time, according to the state of the weather.

ART. 9. The provisions of this protocol shall be rigidly respected.

ART. 10. Agreed; provided no advantage be taken by lawyers.

Lord Chatterino and myself pounced upon the respective documents like two hawks, eagerly looking for flaws, or the means of maintaining the opinions we had before advanced, and which we had both shown so much cleverness in supporting.

"Why, my lord, there is no provision for the appearance of any monikins at all at this interview!"

"The generality of the terms leaves it to be inferred that all may come and go who may be so disposed."

"Your pardon, my lord; article eight contains a direct allusion to *bison-skins* in the *plural*, and under circumstances from which it follows, by a just deduction, that it was contemplated that more than *one* wearer of the said skins should be present at the said interview."

"Perfectly just, Sir John; but you will suffer me to observe that by article one, it is conditioned that there shall be an interview; and by article three, it is furthermore agreed that the said interview shall be conducted 'on philosophical and *liberal* principles;' now, it need scarcely be urged, good Sir John, that it would be the extreme of *illiberality* to deny to one

party any privilege that was possessed by the other."

"Perfectly just, my lord, were this an affair of mere courtesy; but legal constructions must be made on legal principles, or else, as jurists and diplomatists, we are all afloat on the illimitable ocean of conjecture."

"And yet article ten expressly stipulates that 'no advantage shall be taken by lawyers.' By considering articles three and ten profoundly and in conjunction, we learn that it was the intention of the negotiators to spread the mantle of liberality, apart from all the subtleties and devices of mere legal practitioners, over the whole proceeding. Permit me, in corroboration of what is now urged, to appeal to the voices of those who framed the very conditions about which we are now arguing. Did *you*, sir," continued my Lord Chatterino, turning to Captain Poke, with emphasis and dignity; "did you, sir, when you drew up this celebrated article ten—did you deem that you were publishing authority of which the lawyers could take advantage?"

A deep and very sonorous "No," was the energetic reply of Mr. Poke.

My Lord Chatterino, then turning, with equal grace, to the Doctor, first diplomatically waving his tail three times, continued:—"And you, sir, in drawing up article three, did you conceive that you were supporting and promulgating *illiberal* principles?"

The question was met by a prompt negative, when the young noble paused, and looked at me like one who had completely triumphed.

"Perfectly eloquent, completely convincing, irrefutably argumentative, and unanswerably just, my lord," I put in; "but I must be permitted to hint that the validity of all laws is derived from the *enactment*; now the enactment, or, in the case of a treaty, the virtue of the stipulation, is not derived from the *intention* of the party who may happen to *draw up a law* or *a clause*, but from the *assent* of the *legal deputies*. In the present instance, there are two negotiators; and I now ask permission to address a few questions to them, reversing the order of your own interrogatories, and the result may possibly furnish a clew to the *quo animo*, in a new light." Addressing the philosopher, I continued—"Did *you*, sir, in assenting to article ten, imagine that you were defeating justice, countenancing oppression, and succoring might to the injury of right?"

The answer was a solemn, and, I do not doubt, a very conscientious, "No."

"And *you*, sir," turning to Captain Poke, "did you in assenting to article three, in the least conceive that, by any possibility, the foes of humanity could torture your approbation into the means of determining that the bison-skin wearers were not to be upon a perfect footing with the best monikins of the land?"

"Blast me, if I did!"

"But, Sir John Goldencalf, the Socratic method of reasoning—"

"Was first resorted to by yourself, my lord—"

"Nay, good sir—"

"Permit me, my dear lord—"

"Sir John—"

"My lord—"

Hereupon the gentle Chatterissa again advanced, and by another timely interposition of her graceful tact, she succeeded in preventing the reply. The parallel of the runaway horse was acted over, and I came to another standstill. Lord Chatterino now gallantly proposed that the whole affair should be referred, with full powers, to the ladies. I could not refuse; and the plenipotentiaries retired, under a growling accompaniment of Captain Poke, who pretty plainly declared that women caused more quarrels than all the rest of the world, and, from the little he had seen, he expected it would turn out the same with monikinas.

The female sex certainly possess a facility of composition that is denied our portion of the creation. In an incredibly short time, the referees returned with the following *programme*.

PROTOCOL of an interview between, etc.

The contracting parties agree as follows, viz.:

ARTICLE 1. There shall be an amicable, logical, philosophical, ethical, liberal, general, and controversial interview.

ART. 2. The interview shall be amicable.

ART. 3. The interview shall be general.

ART. 4. The interview shall be logical.

ART. 5. The interview shall be ethical.

ART. 6. The interview shall be philosophical.

ART. 7. The interview shall be liberal.

ART. 8. The interview shall be controversial.

ART. 9. The interview shall be controversial, liberal, philosophical, ethical, logical, general, and amicable.

ART. 10. The interview shall be as particularly agreed upon.

The cat does not leap upon the mouse with more avidity than Lord Chatterino and myself pounced upon the third *protocol*, seeking new grounds for the argument each was resolved on.

"*Auguste cher Auguste!*" exclaimed the lovely Chatterissa, in the prettiest Parisian accent I thought I had ever heard—"*Pour moi!*"

"*A moi! monseigneur,*" I put in, flourishing my copy of the protocol—I was checked in the midst of this controversial ardor by a tug at the bison-skin; when, casting a look behind me, I saw Captain Poke winking and making other signs that he wished to say a word in a corner.

"I think, Sir John," observed the worthy sealer, "if we ever mean to let this bargain come to a catastrophe, it might as well be done now. The females have been cunning, but the deuce is in it if we cannot weather upon two women before the matter is well over. In Stunnin'tun, when it is thought best to accommodate proposals, why we object and raise a breeze in the beginning, but toward the end we kinder soften and mollify, or else trade would come to a stand. The hardest gale must blow its pipe out. Trust to me to floor the best argument the best monkey of them all can agitate!"

"This matter is getting serious, Noah, and I am filled with an *esprit de corps*. Do you not begin yourself to feel human?"

"Kinder; but more bisonish than anything else. Let them go on, Sir John; and, when the time comes, we will take them aback, or set me down as a pettifogger."

The captain winked knowingly; and I began to see that there was some sense in his opinion. On rejoining our friends, or allies, I scarce know which to call them, I found that the amiable Chatterissa had equally calmed the diplomatic ardor of her lover again, and we now met on the best possible terms. The *protocol* was accepted by acclamation; and preparations were instantly commenced for the lecture of Dr. Reasono.

CHAPTER XI.

A PHILOSOPHY THAT IS BOTTOMED ON SOMETHING SUBSTANTIAL—SOME REASONS PLAINLY PRESENTED, AND CAVILING OBJECTIONS PUT TO FLIGHT BY A CHARGE OF LOGICAL BAYONETS.

DR. REASONO was quite as reasonable, in the personal embellishments of his lyceum, as any public lecturer I remember to have seen, who was required to execute his functions in the presence of ladies. If I say that his coat had been brushed, his tail newly curled, and that his air was a little more than usually "solemnized," as Captain Poke described it in a decent whisper, I believe all will be said that is either necessary or true. He placed himself behind a footstool, which served as a table, smoothed its covering a little with his paws, and at once proceeded to business. It may be well to add that he lectured without notes, and, as the subject did not immediately call for experiments, without any apparatus.

Waving his tail toward the different parts of the room in which his audience was seated, the philosopher commenced.

"As the present occasion, my hearers," he said, "is one of those accidental calls upon science, to which all belonging to the academies are liable, and does not de-

mand more than the heads of our thesis to be explained, I shall not dig into the roots of the subject, but limit myself to such general remarks as may serve to furnish the outlines of our philosophy, natural, moral, and political—"

"How sir," I cried, "have you a political as well as a moral philosophy?"

"Beyond a question; and a very useful philosophy it is. No interests requires more philosophy than those connected with politics. To resume our philosophy, natural, moral, and political, reserving most of the propositions, demonstrations, and corollaries for greater leisure, and a more advanced state of information in the class. Prescribing to myself these salutary limits, therefore, I shall begin only with nature.

"Nature is a term that we use to express the pervading and governing principle of created things. It is known both as a generic and a specific term, signifying in the former character the elements and combination of omnipotence, as applied to matter in general, and in the latter its particular subdivisions, in connection with matter in its infinite varieties. It is moreover subdivided into its physical and moral attributes, which admit also of the two grand distinctions just named. Thus, when we say nature, in the abstract, meaning physically, we should be understood as alluding to those general, uniform, absolute, consistent, and beautiful laws, which control and render harmonious, as a great whole, the entire action, affinities, and destinies of the universe; and when we say, nature in the speciality, we would be understood to speak of the nature of a rock, of a tree, of air, fire, water, and land. Again; in alluding to a moral nature in the abstract, we mean sin, and its weaknesses, its attractions, its deformities; in a word, its totality; while, on the other hand, when we use the term in this sense, under the limit of a speciality, we confine its signification to the particular shades of natural qualities that mark the precise object named. Let us illustrate our positions by a few brief examples.

"When we say 'Oh nature, how art thou glorious, sublime, instructive!'—we mean that her laws emanate from a power of infinite intelligence and perfection; and when we say 'Oh nature, how art thou frail, vain and insufficient!'—we mean that she is, after all, but a secondary quality, inferior to that which brought her into existence, for definite, limited, and, doubtless, useful purposes. In these examples we treat the principle in the abstract.

"The examples of nature in the speciality will be more familiar, and, although in no degree more true, will be better understood by the generality of my auditors. Especial nature, in the physical signification, is apparent to the senses, and is betrayed in the outward forms of things through their force, magnitude, substance, and proportions, and, in its more mysterious properties, to examination, by their laws, harmony, and action. Especial moral nature is denoted in the different propensities, capacities and conduct of the different classes of all moral beings. In this latter sense we have monikin nature, dog nature, horse nature, hog nature, human nature—"

"Permit me, Dr. Reasono," I interrupted, "to inquire if, by this classification, you intend to convey more than may be understood by the accidental arrangement of your examples?"

"Purely the latter, I do assure you, Sir John."

"And do you admit the great distinction of animal and vegetable natures?"

"Our academies are divided on this point. One school contends that all living nature is to be embraced in a great comprehensive genus, while another admits of the distinctions you have named. I am of the latter opinion, inclining to the belief that Nature herself has drawn the line between the two classes, by bestowing on one the double gift of the moral and physical nature, and by withdrawing the former from the other. The existence of the moral nature is denoted by the presence of the will. The academy of Leaphigh has made an elaborate classification of all the known animals, of which the sponge is at the bottom of the list, and the monikin at the top.

"Sponges are commonly uppermost," growled Noah.

"Sir," said I, with a disagreeable rising at the throat, "am I to understand that your savans account man an animal in a middle state between a sponge and a monkey?"

"Really, Sir John, this warmth is quite unsuited to philosophical discussion — if you continue to indulge in it, I shall find myself compelled to postpone the lecture."

At this rebuke I made a successful effort to restrain myself, although my *esprit de corps* nearly choked me. Intimating, as well as I could, a change of purpose, Dr. Reasono, who had stood suspended over his table with an air of doubt, waved his tail, and proceeded: —

"Sponges, oysters, crabs, sturgeons, clams, toads, snakes, lizards, skunks, opossums, ant-eaters, baboons, negroes, woodchucks, lions, Esquimaux, sloths, hogs, Hottentots, orang-outangs, men and monikins, are, beyond a quesiton, all animals. The only disputed point among us is, whether they are all of the same genus, forming varieties or species, or whether they are to be divided into the three great families of the *improvables*, the *unimprovables*, and the *retrogressives*. They who would maintain that we form but one great family, reason by certain conspicuous analogies, that serve as so many links to unite the great chain of the animal world. Taking man as a center, for instance, they show that this creature possesses, in common with every other creature, some observable property. Thus, man is, in one particular, like a sponge; in another, he is like an oyster; a hog is like a man; the skunk has one peculiarity of a man; the orang-outang another; the sloth another—"

"King!"

"And so on to the end of the chapter. This school of philosphers, while it has been very ingeniously supported, is not, however, the one most in favor just at this moment in the academy of Leaphigh—"

"Just at this moment, doctor!"

"Certainly, sir. Do you not know that truths, physical as well as moral, undergo their revolutions, the same as all created nature? The academy has paid great attention to this subject: and it issues annually an almanac, in which the different phases, the revolutions, the periods, the eclipses, whether partial or total, the distances from the center of light, the *apogee* and *perigee* of all the more prominent truths, are calculated with singular accuracy; and by the aid of which the cautious are enabled to keep themselves, as near as possible, within the bounds of reason. We deem this effort of the monikin mind as the sublimest of all its inventions, and as furnishing the strongest known evidence of its near approach to the consummation of our earthly destiny. This is not the place to dwell on that particular point of our philosophy, however; and, for the present, we will postpone the subject."

"Yet you will permit me, Dr. Reasono, in virtue of clause 1, article 5, *protocol* No. 1 (which *protocol*, if not absolutely adopted, must be supposed to contain the *spirit* of that which was), to inquire whether the calculations of the revolutions of truth, do not lead to dangerous moral extravagances, ruinous speculations in ideas, and serve to unsettle society?"

The philosopher withdrew a moment with my Lord Chatterino, to consult whether it would be prudent to admit of the validity of *protocol* No. 1, even in this indirect manner; whereupon it was decided between them, that, as such admission would lay open all the vexatious questions that had just been so happily disposed of, clause 1 of article 5 having a direct connection with clause 2: clauses 1 and 2 forming the whole article; and the said article 5, in its entirety, forming an integral portion of the whole instrument; and the doctrine of constructions, enjoining that instruments are to be construed like wills, by their general and not by their especial tendencies, it would be dangerous to the objects of the interview to allow the application to be granted. But, reserving a protest against the concession being interpreted into a

precedent, it might be well to concede that as an act of courtesy, which was denied as a right. Hereupon, Dr. Reasono informed me that these calculations of the revolutions of truth *did* lead to certain moral extravagances, and in many instances to ruinous speculations in ideas; that the academy of Leaphigh, and so far as his information extended, the academy of every other country, had found the subject of *truth*, more particularly *moral* truth, the one of all others the most difficult to manage, the most likely to be abused, and the most dangerous to promulgate. I was moreover promised, at a future day, some illustrations of this branch of the subject.

"To pursue the more regular thread of my lecture," continued Dr. Reasono, when he had politely made this digression, "we now divide these portions of the created world into animated and vegetable nature; the former is again divided into the *improvable*, and the *unimprovable*, and the *retrogressive*. The improvable embraces all those species which are marching, by slow, progressive, but immutable mutations, toward the perfection of terrestrial life, or to that last, elevated, and sublime condition of mortality, in which the material makes its final struggle with the immaterial—mind with matter. The improvable class of animals, agreeably to the monikin dogmas, commences with those species in which matter has the most unequivocal ascendency, and terminates with those in which mind is as near perfection as this mortal coil will allow. We hold that mind and matter, in that mysterious union which connects the spiritual with the physical being, commence in the medium state, undergoing, not, as some men have pretended, transmigrations of the soul only, but such gradual and imperceptible changes of both soul and body as have peopled the world with so many wonderful beings; wonderful, mentally and physically; and all of which (meaning all of the *improvable* class) are no more than animals of the same great genus, on the high-road of tendencies, who are advancing toward the last stage of improvement, previously to their final translation to another planet and a new existence.

"The *retrogressive* class is composed of those specimens which, owing to their destiny, take a false direction; which, instead of tending to the immaterial, tend to the material; which gradually become more and more under the influence of matter, until, by a succession of physical translations, the will is eventually lost, and they become incorporated with the earth itself. Under this last transformation, these purely materialized beings are chemically analyzed in the great laboratory of nature, and their component parts are separated; thus the bones become rocks, the flesh earth, the spirits air, the blood water, the gristle clay, and the ashes of the will are converted into the element of fire. In this class we enumerate whales, elephants, hippopotami, and divers other brutes, which visibly exhibit accumulations of matter that must speedily triumph over the less material portions of their natures."

"And yet, doctor, there are facts that militate against the theory; the elephant, for instance, is accounted one of the most intelligent of all the quadrupeds."

"A mere false demonstration, sir. Nature delights in these little equivocations; thus, we have false suns, false rainbows, false prophets, false vision, and even false philosophy. There are entire races of both our species, too, as the Congo and the Esquimaux, for yours, and baboons and the common monkeys, that inhabit various parts of the world possessed by the human species, for ours, which are mere shadows of the forms and qualities that properly distinguish the animal in its state of perfection."

"How, sir! are you not, then, of the same family as all the other monkeys that we see hopping and skipping about the streets?"

"No more, sir, than you are of the same family as the flat-nosed, thick-lipped, low-browed, ink-skinned negro, or the squalid, passionless, brutalized Esquimaux. I have said that nature delights in vagaries; and all these are no more than some of her mystifications.

Of this class is the elephant, who, while verging nearest to pure materialism, makes a deceptive parade of the quality he is fast losing. Instances of this species of playing trumps, if I may so express it, are common in all classes of beings. How often, for instance, do men, just as they are about to fail, make a parade of wealth, women seem obdurate an hour before they capitulate, and diplomatists call Heaven to be a witness of their resolutions to the contrary, the day before they sign and seal? In the case of the elephant, however, there is a slight exception to the general rule, which is founded on an extraordinary struggle between mind and matter, the former making an effort that is unusual, and which may be said to form an exception to the ordinary warfare between these two principles, as it is commonly conducted in the retrogressive class of animals. The most infallible sign of the triumph of mind over matter is in the development of the tail—"

"King!"

"Of the tail, Dr. Reasono."

"By all means, sir—that seat of reason, the tail! Pray, Sir John, what other portion of our frames did you imagine was indicative of intellect?"

"Among men, Dr. Reasono, it is commonly thought the head is the more honorable member, and, of late, we have made analytical maps of this part of our physical formation, by which it is pretended to know the breadth and length of a moral quality, no less that its boundaries."

"You have made the best use of your materials, such as they were, and I daresay the map in question, all things considered, is a very clever performance. But in the complication and abstruseness of this very moral chart (one of which I perceive standing on your mantel-piece), you may learn the confusion which still reigns over the human intellect. Now in regarding us, you can understand the very converse of your dilemma. How much easier, for instance, is it to take a yard-stick, and by a simple admeasurement of a tail come to a sound, obvious and incontrovertible conclusion as to the extent of the intellect of the specimen, than by the complicated, contradictory, self-balancing and questionable process to which you are reduced! Were there only this fact, it would abundantly establish the higher moral condition of the monikin race, as it is compared with that of man."

"Dr. Reasono, am I to understand that the monikin family seriously entertain a position so extravagant as this; that a monkey is a creature more intellectual and more highly civilized than man?"

"Seriously, good Sir John! Why, you are the first respectable person it has been my fortune to meet, who has even affected to doubt the fact. It is well known that both belong to the *improvable* class of animals, and that monkeys, as you are pleased to term us, were once men, with all their passions, weaknesses, inconsistencies, modes of philosophy, unsound ethics, frailties, incongruities and subserviency to matter; that they passed into the monikin state by degrees, and that large divisions of them are constantly evaporating into the immaterial world, completely spiritualized and free from the dross of flesh. I do not mean in what is called death—for that is no more than an occasional deposit of matter to be resumed in a new aspect, and with a nearer approach to the grand results (whether of the *improvable* or *retrogressive* classes)—but those final mutations which transfer us to another planet, to enjoy a higher state of being, and leaving us always on the high-road toward final excellence."

"All this is very ingenious, sir; but before you can persuade me into the belief that man is an animal inferior to a monkey, Dr. Reasono, you will allow me to say that you must prove it."

"Ay, ay, or me, either," put in Captain Poke, waspishly.

"Were I to cite my proofs, gentlemen," continued the philosopher, whose spirit appeared to be much less moved by our doubts than ours were by his position—"I should in the first place refer you to history. All the monikin writers are agreed in recording the gradual transla-

tion of the species from the human family—"

"This may do very well, sir, for the latitude of Leaphigh, but permit me to say that no human historian, from Moses down to Buffon, has ever taken such a view of our respective races. There is not a word in any of all these writers on the subject."

"How should there be, sir? History is not a prediction, but a record of the past. Their silence is so much negative proof in our favor. Does Tacitus, for instance, speak of the French revolution? Is not Herodotus silent on the subject of the independence of the American continent?—or do any of the Greek and Roman writers give us the annals of Stunnin'tun—a city whose foundations were most probably laid some time after the commencement of the Christian era? It is morally impossible that men or monikins can faithfully relate events that have never happened; and as it has never yet happened to any man, who is still a man, to be translated to the monikin state of being, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that he can know nothing about it. If you want historical proofs, therefore, of what I say, you must search the monikin annals for evidence. There it is to be found with an infinity of curious details: and I trust the time is not far distant, when I shall have great pleasure in pointing out to you some of the most approved chapters of our best writers on this subject. But we are not confined to the testimony of history, in establishing our condition to be of the secondary formation. The internal evidence is triumphant; we appeal to our simplicity, our philosophy, the state of the arts among us, in short, to all those concurrent proofs which are dependent on the highest possible state of civilization. In addition to this, we have the infallible testimony which is to be derived from the development of our tails. Our system of caudology is, in itself, a triumphant proof of the high improvement of the monikin reason."

"Do I comprehend you aright, Dr. Reasono, when I understand your system of caudology, or tailology, to render it into the vernacular, to dogmatize on the possibility that the seat of reason in man, which to-day is certainly in his brains, can ever descend into a tail?"

"If you deem development, improvement and simplification a descent, beyond a question, sir. But your figure is a bad one, Sir John; for ocular demonstration is before you, that a monikin can carry his tail as high as a man can possibly carry his head. Our species, in this sense, is morally nicked; and it costs us no effort to be on a level with human kings. We hold with you, that the brain is the seat of reason, while the animal is in what we call the human probation, but that it is a reason undeveloped, imperfect, and confused; cased, as it were, in an envelope unsuited to its functions; but that, as it gradually oozes out of its straitened receptacle toward the base of the animal, it acquires solidity, lucidity, and, finally, by elongation and development, point. If you examine the human brain you will find it, though capable of being stretched to a great length, compressed in a diminutive compass, involved and snarled; whereas the same physical portion of the genus gets simplicity, a beginning and an end, a directness and consecutiveness that are necessary to logic, and, as has just been mentioned, a point, in the monikin seat of reason, which by all analogy go to prove the superiority of the animal possessing advantages so great."

"Nay, sir, if you come to analogies, they will be found to prove more than you may wish. In vegetation, for instance, saps ascend for the purposes of fructification and usefulness; and, reasoning from the analogies of the vegetable world, it is far more probable that tails have ascended into brains than that brains have descended into tails; and, consequently, that men are much more likely to be an improvement on monkeys, than monkeys an improvement on men."

I spoke with warmth, I know; for the doctrine of Dr. Reasono was new to me; and by this time, my *esprit de corps* had pretty effectually blinded reflection.

"You gave him a red-hot shot that

time, Sir John," whispered Captain Poke at my elbow; "now, if you are so disposed, I will wring the necks of all these little blackguards, and throw them out of the window."

I immediately intimated that any display of brute force would militate directly against our cause; as the object, just at that moment, was to be as immaterial as possible.

"Well, well, manage it in your own way, Sir John, and I'm quite as immaterial as you can wish; but should these cunning varmints ra'ally get the better of us in the argument, I shall never dare look at Miss Poke, or show my face ag'in in Stunnin'tun."

This little aside was secretly conducted, while Dr. Reasono was drinking a glass of *eau sucrée;* but he soon returned to the subject, with the dignified gravity that never forsook him.

"Your remark touching saps has the usual savor of human ingenuity, blended, however, with the proverbial short-sightedness of the species. It is very true that saps ascend for fructification; but what is this fructification, to which you allude? It is no more than a false demonstration of the energies of the plant. For all the purposes of growth, life, durability, and the final conversion of the vegetable matter into an element, the root is the seat of power and authority; and, in particular, the tap-root above or rather below all others. This tap-root may be termed the tail of vegetation. You may pluck fruits with impunity—nay, you may even lop all the branches, and the tree shall survive; but, put the ax to the root, and the pride of the forest falls."

All this was too evidently true to be denied, and I felt worried and badgered; for no man likes to be beaten in a discussion of this sort, and more especially by a monkey. I bethought me of the elephant, and determined to make one more thrust, by the aid of his powerful tusks, before I gave up the point.

"I am inclined to think, Dr. Reasono," I put in as soon as possible, "that your *savans* have not been very happy in illustrating their theory by means of the elephant. This animal, besides being a mass of flesh, is too well provided with intellect to be passed off for a dunce; and he not only has *one*, but he might almost be said to be provided with *two* 'tails.'"

"That has been his chief misfortune, sir. Matter, in the great warfare between itself and mind, has gone on the principle of 'divide and conquer.' You are nearer the truth than you imagined, for the trunk of the elephant is merely the abortion of a tail; and yet, you see, it contains nearly all the intelligence that the animal possesses. On the subject of the fate of the elephant, however, theory is confirmed by actual experiment. Do not your geologists and naturalists speak of the remains of animals, which are no longer to be found among living things?"

"Certainly, sir; the mastodon—the megatherium, iguanodon; and the plesiosaurus—"

"And do you not also find unequivocal evidences of animal matter incorporated with rocks?"

"This fact must be admitted, too."

"These phenomena, as you call them, are no more than the final deposits which nature has made in the cases of those creatures in which matter has completely overcome its rival, mind. So soon as the will is entirely extinct, the being ceases to live; or it is no longer an animal. It falls and reverts altogether to the element of matter. The processes of decomposition and incorporation are longer, or shorter, according to circumstances; and these fossil remains of which your writers say so much, are merely cases that have met with accidental obstacles to their final decomposition. As respects our two species, a very cursory examination of their qualities ought to convince any candid mind of the truth of our philosophy. Thus, the physical part of man is much greater in proportion to the spiritual, than it is in the monikins; his habits are grosser and less intellectual; he requires sauce and condiments in his food; he is further removed from simplicity, and, by necessary implication, from high civilization; he eats flesh, a certain proof that the ma-

terial principle is still strong in the ascendant; he has no *cauda*—"

"On this point, Dr. Reasono, I would inquire if your scholars attach any weight to traditions?"

"The greatest possible, sir. It is the monikin tradition that our species is composed of men refined, of diminished matter and augmented minds, with the seat of reason extricated from the confinement and confusion of the *caput*, and extended, unraveled, and rendered logical and consecutive, in the *cauda*."

"Well, sir, *we* too have our traditions; and an eminent writer, at no great distance of time, has laid it down as incontrovertible, that men once *had caudæ*."

"A mere prophetic glance into the future, as coming events are known to cast their shadows before."

"Sir, the philosopher in question establishes his position, by pointing to the stumps."

"He has unluckily mistaken a foundation-stone for a ruin! Such errors are not unfrequent with the ardent and ingenious. That men *will* have tails, I make no doubt; but that they *have* ever reached this point of perfection, I do most solemnly deny. There are many premonitory symptoms of their approaching this condition; the current opinions of the day, the dress, habits, fashions, and philosophy of the species, encourage the belief; but hitherto you have never reached the enviable distinction. As to traditions, even your own are all in favor of our theory. Thus, for instance, you have a tradition that the earth was once peopled by giants. Now, this is owing to the fact that men were formerly more under the influence of matter and less under that of mind than to-day. You admit that you diminish in size, and improve in moral attainments; all of which goes to establish the truth of the monikin philosophy. You begin to lay less stress on physical, and more on moral excellences; and, in short, many things show that the time for the final liberation and grand development of your brains, in not far distant. This much I very gladly concede; for, while the dogmas of our schools are not to be disregarded, I very cheerfully admit that you are our fellow-creatures, though in a more infant and less improved condition of society."

"King!"

Here Dr. Reasono announced the necessity of taking a short intermission in order to refresh himself. I retired with Captain Poke, to have a little communication with my fellow-mortal, under the peculiar circumstances in which we were placed, and to ask his opinion of what had been said. Noah swore bitterly at some of the conclusions of the monikin philosopher, affirming that he should like no better sport than to hear him lecture in the streets of Stunin'tun, where, he assured me, such doctrine would not be tolerated any longer than was necessary to sharpen a harpoon, or to load a gun. Indeed, he did not know but the Doctor would be incontinently kicked over into Rhode Island, without ceremony.

"For that matter," continued the indignant old sealer, "I should ask no better sport, than to have permission to put the big toe of my right foot, under full sail, against the part of the blackguard where his beloved tail is stepped. That would soon bring him to reason. Why, as for his *cauda*, if you will believe me, Sir John, I once saw a man, on the coast of Patagonia—a savage, to be sure, and not a philosopher, as this fellow pretends to be—who had an outrigger of this sort, as long as a ship's ringtail-boom. And what was he, after all, but a poor devil who did not know a sea-lion from a grampus!"

This assertion of Captain Poke relieved my mind considerably; and laying aside the bison-skin, I asked him to have the goodness to examine the localities, with some particularity, about the termination of the dorsal bone, in order to ascertain if there were any encouraging signs to be discovered. Captain Poke put on his spectacles, for time had brought the worthy mariner to their use, as he said, "whenever he had occasion to read fine print;" and, after some time, I had the satisfaction to hear him declare, that if it was a *cauda* I wanted, there was as good a place

to step one, as could be found about any monkey in the universe; "and you have only to say the word, Sir John, and I will just step into the next room, and by help of my knife and a little judgment in choosing, I'll fit you out with a jury-article, which, if there be any ra'al vartue in this sort of thing, will qualify you at once to be a judge, or for that matter, a bishop."

We were now summoned again to the lecture-room, and I had barely time to thank Captain Poke for his obliging offer, which circumstances just then, however, forbade my accepting.

CHAPTER XII.

BETTER AND BETTER—A HIGHER FLIGHT OF REASON—MORE OBVIOUS TRUTHS, DEEPER PHILOSOPHY, AND FACTS THAT EVEN AN OSTRICH MIGHT DIGEST.

"I GLADLY quit what I fear some present may have considered the personal part of my lecture," resumed Dr. Reasono, "to turn to those portions of the theme that should possess a common interest, awaken common pride, and excite common felicitations. I now propose to say a few words on that part of our natural philosophy which is connected with the planetary system, the monikin location—and, as a consequence from both, the creation of the world!"

"Although dying with impatience to be enlightened on all these interesting points, you will grant me leave to inquire, *en passant,* Dr. Reasono, if your savans receive the Mosaic account of the creation or not."

"As far as it corroborates our own system, sir, and no further. There would be a manifest inconsistency in our giving an antagonist validity to any hostile theory, let it come from Moses or Aaron; as one of your native good sense and subsequent cultivation will readily perceive."

"Permit me to intimate, Dr. Reasono, that the distinction your philosophers take in this matter is directly opposed to a very arbitrary canon in the law of evidence, which dictates the necessity of repudiating the whole of a witness's testimony, when we repudiate a part."

"That may be a human, but it is not a monikin distinction. So far from admitting the soundness of the principle, we hold that no monikin is ever wholly right, or that he will be wholly right, so long as he remains in the least under the influence of matter; and we therefore winnow the false from the true, rejecting the former as worse than useless, while we take the latter as the nutriment of facts."

"I now repeat my apologies for so often interrupting you, venerable and learned sir; and I entreat you will not waste another moment in replying to my interrogatories, but proceed at once to an explanation of your planetary system, or of any other little thing it may suit your convenience to mention. When one listens to a real philosopher, one is certain to learn something that is either useful or agreeable, let the subject be what it may."

"By the monikin philosophy, gentlemen," continued Dr. Reasono, "we divide the great component parts of this earth into land and water. These two principles we term the *primary* elements. Human philosophy has added air and fire to the list; but these we reject either entirely, or admit them only as secondary elements. That neither air nor fire is a *primary* element, may be proved by experiment. Thus, air can be formed, in the quality of gases, can be rendered pure or foul, is dependent on evaporation, being no more than ordinary matter in a state of high rarefaction. Fire has no independent existence; requires fuel for its support, and is evidently a property that is derived from the combinations of other principles. Thus, by putting two or more billets of wood together, by rapid friction you produce fire. Abstract the air suddenly and your fire becomes extinct; abstract the wood and you have the same result. From these two experiments it is shown that fire has no independent existence, and therefore is not an element. On the other hand, take a billet of wood and let it be completely saturated with water; the wood acquires a new property (as also by the application of

fire, which converts it into ashes and air), for its specific gravity is increased, it becomes less inflammable, emits vapor more readily, and yields less readily to the blow of the ax. Place the same billet under a powerful screw and a vessel beneath. Compress the billet, and by a sufficient application of force, you will have the wood, perfectly dry, left beneath the screw, and the vessel will contain water. Thus it is shown that land (all vegetable matter being no more than fungi of the earth) is a *primary* element, and that water is also a *primary* element; while air and fire are not.

"Having established the elements, I shall, for brevity's sake, suppose the world created. In the beginning the orb was placed in vacuum, stationary, and with its axis perpendicular to the plane of what is now called its orbit. Its only revolution was the diurnal."

"And the changes of the seasons?"

"Had not yet taken place. The days and nights were equal; there were no eclipses; the same stars were always visible. This state of the earth is supposed, from certain geological proofs, to have continued about a thousand years, during which time the struggle between mind and matter was solely confined to quadrupeds. Man is thought to have made his appearance, so far as our documents go to establish the fact, about the year of the world one thousand and three. About this period, too, it is supposed that fire was generated by the friction of the earth's axis, while making the diurnal movement; or, as some imagine, by the friction of the periphery of the orb, rubbing against vacuum at the rate of so many miles a minute. The fire penetrating the crust, soon got access to the bodies of water that fill the cavities of the earth. From this time is to be dated the existence of a new and most important agent in the terrestrial phenomena, called *steam*. Vegetation now began to appear, as the earth received warmth from within—"

"Pray, sir, may I ask in what manner all the animals existed previously?"

"By feeding on each other. The strong devoured the weak, until the most diminutive of the animalcula was reached, when these turned on their persecutors, and profiting by their insignificance, commenced devouring the strongest. You find daily parallels to this phenomenon in the history of man. He who by his energy and force has triumphed over his equals, is frequently the prey of the insignificant and vile. You doubtless know that the polar regions, even in the original attitude of the earth, owing to their receiving the rays of the sun obliquely, must have possessed a less genial climate than the parts of the orb that lie between the arctic and the antarctic circles. This was a wise provision of Providence to prevent a premature occupation of those chosen regions, or to cause them to be left uninhabited, until mind had so far mastered matter as to have brought into existence the first monikin."

"May I venture to ask to what epoch you refer the appearance of the first of your species?"

"To the monikin epocha, beyond a doubt, sir — but if you mean to ask in what year of the world this event took place, I should answer, about the year 4017. It is true that certain of our writers affect to think that divers men were approaching to the sublimation of the monikin mind previously to this period; but the better opinion is, that these cases were no more than what are termed premonitory. Thus Socrates, Plato, Confucius, Aristotle, Euclid, Zeno, Diogenes and Seneca, were merely so many admonishing types of the future condition of man, indicating their near approach to the monikin, or to the final translation."

"And Epicurus—"

"Was an exaggeration of the material principle that denoted the retrogression of a large portion of the race toward brutality and matter. These phenomena are still of daily occurrence."

"Do you, then, hold the opinion, for instance, Dr. Reasono, that Socrates is now a monikin philosopher, with his brain unraveled and rendered logically consecutive, and that Epicurus is transformed

perchance into a hippopotamus or a rhinoceros, with tusks, horns, and hide?"

"You quite mistake our dogmas, Sir John. We do not believe in transmigration of classes. Thus, we hold that whenever a given generation of men, in a peculiar state of society, attain, in the aggregate, a certain degree of moral improvement, or *mentality*, as we term it in the schools, that there is an admixture of their qualities in masses, some believe by scores, others think by hundreds, and others again pretend by thousands; and if it is found, by the analysis that is regularly instituted by nature, that the proportions are just, the material is consigned to the monikin birth; if not, it is repudiated, and either kneaded anew for another human experiment, or consigned to the vast stores of dormant matter. Thus all individuality, so far as it is connected with the past, is lost."

"But, sir, existing facts contradict one of the most important of your propositions; while you admit that a want of a change in the seasons would be a consequence of the perpendicularity of the earth's axis to the plane of its present orbit, this change in the seasons is a matter not to be denied. Flesh and blood testify against you here, no less than reason."

"I spoke of things as they were, sir, previously to the birth of the monikinia; since which time a great, salutary, harmonious, and contemplated alteration has occurred. Nature had reserved the polar regions for the new species, with divers obvious and benevolent purposes. It was rendered uninhabitable by the obliquity of the sun's rays; and though matter, in the shape of mastodons and whales, with an instinct of its antagonistic destination, had frequently invaded their precincts, it was only to leave the remains of the first embedded in fields of ice, memorials of the uselessness of struggling against destiny, and to furnish proofs of the same great truth in the instance of the others; who if they *did* enter the polar basins as masters of the great deep, either left their bones there, or returned in the same characters as they went. From the appearance of animal nature on the earth, down to the period when the monikin race arose, the regions in question were not only uninhabited, but virtually uninhabitable. When however, nature, always wary, wise, beneficent, and never to be thwarted, had prepared the way, those phenomena were exhibited that cleared the road for the new species. I have alluded to the internal struggle between fire and water, and to their progeny, steam. This new agent was now required to act.

"A moment's attention to the manner in which the next great step in the progress of civilization was made, will show with what foresight and calculation our common mother had established her laws. The earth is flattened at the poles, as is well imagined by some of the human philosophers, in consequence of its diurnal movement commencing while the ball was still in a state of fusion, which naturally threw off a portion of the unkneaded matter toward the periphery. This was not done without the design of accomplishing a desired end. The matter that was thus accumulated at the equator, was necessarily abstracted from other parts; and in this manner the crust of the globe became thinnest at the poles. When a sufficiency of steam had been generated in the center of the ball, a safety-valve was evidently necessary to prevent a total disruption. As there was no other machinist than nature, she worked with her own tools, and agreeable to her own established laws. The thinnest portions of the crust opportunely yielded to prevent a catastrophe, when the superfluous and heated vapor escaped, in a right line with the earth's axis, into vacuum. This phenomenon occurred, as nearly as we have been able to ascertain, about the year 700 before the Christian era commenced, or some two centuries previously to the birth of the first monikins."

"And why so early, may I presume to inquire, doctor?"

"Simply that there might be time for the new climate to melt the ice that had accumulated about the islands and con

Dr. Reasono took a fid, and with its end he traced all the desired objects with great readiness and skill.—*The Monikins.*

tinents of that region (for it was only at the southern extremity of the earth that the explosion had taken place) in the course of so many centuries. Two hundred and seventy years of the active and unremitted agency of steam sufficed for this end; since the accomplishment of which, the monikin has been in the undisturbed enjoyment of the whole territory, together with its blessed fruits."

"Am I to understand," asked Captain Poke, with more interest than he had before manifested in the philosopher's lecture, "that your folks, when at hum, live to the south'ard of the belt of ice that we mariners always fall in with somewhere about the parallel of 77° south latitude?"

"Precisely so—alas! that we should, this day, be so far from those regions of peace, delight, intelligence, and salubrity! But the will of Providence be done!—doubtless there is a wise motive for our captivity and sufferings, which may yet lead to the further glory of the monikin race!"

"Will you have the kindness to proceed with your explanations, doctor? If you deny the annual revolution of the earth, in what manner do you account for the changes of the seasons, and other astronomical phenomena, such as the eclipses which so frequently occur?"

"You remind me that the subject is not yet exhausted," the philosopher hurriedly rejoined, hastily and covertly dashing a tear from his eye. "Prosperity produced some of its usual effects among the founders of our species. For a few centuries they went on multiplying in numbers, elongating and rendering still more consecutive their *caudæ*, improving in knowledge and the arts, until some spirits, more audacious than the rest, became restive under the slow march of events, which led them toward perfection at a rate ill-suited to their fiery impatience. At this time the mechanic arts were at the highest pitch of perfection amongst us—we have since, in a great measure, abandoned them as unsuited to, and unnecessary for, an advanced state of civilization—we wor. clothes, constructed canals, and effected other works that were greatly esteemed among the species from which we had emigrated.

"At this time also, the whole monikin family lived together as one people, enjoyed the same laws, and pursued the same objects. But a political sect arose in the region, under the direction of misguided and hot-headed leaders, who brought down upon us the just judgment of Providence, and a multitude of evils that it will require ages to remedy. This sect soon had recourse to religious fanaticism and philosophical sophisms, to attain its end. It grew rapidly in power and numbers; for we monikins, like men, as I have had occasion to observe, are seekers of novelties. At last it proceeded to absolute overt acts of treason against the laws of Providence itself. The first violent demonstration of its madness and folly was, setting up the doctrine that injustice had been done the monikin race, by causing the safety-valve of the world to be opened within their region. Although we were manifestly indebted to this very circumstance for the benignity of our climate, the value of our possessions, the general healthfulness of our families—nay, for our separate existence itself, as an independent species, yet did these excited and ill-judging wretches absolutely wage war upon the most benevolent and the most unequivocal friend they had. Specious promises led to theories, theories to declamations, declamation to combination, combination to denunciation, and denunciation to open hostilities. The matter in dispute was debated for two generations, when the necessary degree of madness having been excited, the leaders of the party, who by this time had worked themselves, through their hobby, into the general control of the monikin affairs, called a meeting of all their partisans and passed certain resolutions, which will never be blotted from the monikin memory, so fatal were their consequences, so ruinous for a time, their effects! They were conceived in the following terms:—

"'At a full and overflowing meeting of the most monikinied of the monikin race,

holden at the house of Peleg Pat (we still used the human appellations at that epoch), in the year of the world 3007, and of the monikin era 317, Plausible Shout was called to the chair, and Ready Quill was named secretary.

"'After several excellent and eloquent addresses from all present, it was unanimously resolved as follows, viz.:

"'That steam is a curse, and not a blessing; and that it deserves to be denounced by all patriotic and true monikins.

"'That we deem it the height of oppression and injustice in nature, that she has placed the great safety-valve of the world within the lawful limits of the monikin territories.

"'That the said safety-valve ought to be removed forthwith; and that it shall be so removed, peaceably if it can, forcibly if it must.

"'That we cordially approve of the sentiments of John Jaw, our present estimable chief magistrate, the incorruptible partisan, the undaunted friend of his friends, the uncompromising enemy of steam, and the sound, pure, orthodox, and true monikin.

"'That we recommend the said Jaw to the confidence of all monikins.

"'That we call upon the country to sustain us in our great, holy, and glorious design, pledging ourselves, posterity, the bones of our ancestors, and all who have gone before or who may come after us, to the faithful execution of our intentions.

"'Signed,

"'PLAUSIBLE SHOUT, Chairman.

"'READY QUILL, Secretary.'

"No sooner were these resolutions promulgated (for instead of being passed at a full meeting, it is now understood they were drawn up between Messrs. Shout and Quill, under the private dictation of Mr. Jaw), than the public mind began seriously to meditate proceeding to extremities. That perfection in the mechanic arts which had hitherto formed our pride and boast, now proved to be our greatest enemy. It is thought that the leaders of this ill-directed party meant, in truth, to confine themselves to certain electioneering effects; but who can stay the torrent, or avert the current of prejudice! The stream was setting against steam; the whole invention of the species was put in motion; and in one year from the passage of the resolutions I have recited, mountains were transported, endless piles of rocks were thrown into the gulf, arches were constructed, and the hole of the safety-valve was hermetically sealed. You will form some idea of the waste of intelligence and energy on this occasion, when I add that it was found, by actual observation, that this artificial portion of the earth was thicker, stronger, and more likely to be durable than the natural. So far did infatuation lead the victims, that they actually caused the whole region to be sounded, and, having ascertained the precise locality of the thinnest portion of the crust, John Jaw, and all the most zealous of his followers, removed to the spot, where they established the seat of their government in triumph. All this time nature rested upon her arms, in the quiet of conscious force. It was not long, however, before our ancestors began to perceive the consequences of their act, in the increase of the cold, in the scarcity of fruits, and in the rapid augmentation of the ice. The monikin enthusiasm is easily awakened in favor of any plausible theory, but it invariably yields to physical pressure. No doubt the human race, better furnished with the material of physical resistance, does not exhibit so much of this weakness, but—"

"Do not flatter us with the exception, doctor. I find so many points of resemblance between us, that I really begin to think we must have had the same origin; and if you would only admit that man is of the secondary formation, and the monikins of the primary, I would accept the whole of your philosophy without a moment's delay."

"As such an admission would be contrary to both fact and doctrine, I trust, my dear sir, you will see the utter impossibility of a professor in the University of Leaphigh making the concession, even in this remote part of the world. As I was

about to observe, the people began to betray uneasiness at the increasing and constant inclemency of the weather; and Mr. John Jaw found it necessary to stimulate their passions by a new development of his principles. His friends and partisans were all assembled in the great square of the new capital, and the following resolutions were, to use the language of a handbill that is still preserved in the archives of the Leaphigh Historical Society (for it would seem they were printed before they were passed), 'unanimously, enthusiastically, and finally adopted,' viz.:

"'*Resolved*, That this meeting has the utmost contempt for steam.

"'*Resolved*, That this meeting defies snow, and sterility, and all other natural disadvantages.

"'*Resolved*, That we will live forever.

"'*Resolved*, That we will henceforward go naked, as the most effectual means of setting the frost at defiance.

"'*Resolved*, That we are now over the thinnest part of the earth's crust in the polar regions.

"'*Resolved*, That henceforth we will support no monikin for any public trust who will not give a pledge to put out all his fires, and to dispense with cooking altogether.

"'*Resolved*, That we are animated by the true spirit of patriotism, reason, good faith, and firmness.

"'*Resolved*, That this meeting now adjourn *sine die*.'

"We are told that the last resolution was just carried by acclamation, when nature arose in her might, and took ample vengeance for all her wrongs. The great boiler of the earth burst, with a tremendous explosion, carrying away, as the thinnest part of the workmanship, not only Mr. John Jaw, and all his partisans, but forty thousand square miles of territory. The last that was seen of them was about thirty seconds after the occurrence of the explosion, when the whole mass disappeared near the northern horizon, going at a rate a little surpassing that of a cannon-ball which has just left its gun."

"King!" exclaimed Noah; "that is what we sailors call 'cut and run.'"

"Was nothing ever heard of Mr. Jaw and his companions, my good doctor?"

"Nothing that could be depended on. Some of our naturalists assume that the monkeys which frequent the other parts of the earth are their descendants, who, stunned by the shock, have lost their reasoning powers, while, at the same time, they show glimmerings of their origin. This is in truth the better opinion of our *savans;* and it is usual with us to distinguish all the human species of monkeys by the name of 'the lost monikins.' Since my captivity chance has thrown me in the way of several of these animals, who were equally under the control of the cruel Savoyards; and in conversing with them, in order to inquire into their traditions and to trace the analogies of language, I have been led to think there is some foundation for the opinion. Of this, however, hereafter."

"Pray, Dr. Reasono, what became of the forty thousand square miles of territory?"

"Of that we have a better account; for one of our vessels, which was far to the northward on an exploring expedition, fell in with it in longitude 2° from Leaphigh, latitude 6° S., and by her means it was ascertained that divers islands had been already formed by falling fragments; and, judging by the direction of the main body, when last seen, the fertility of that part of the world, and various geological proofs, we hold that the great western archipelago is the deposit of the remainder."

"And the monikin region, sir—what was the consequence of this phenomenon to that part of the world?"

"Awful—sublime—various—and durable! The more important, or the personal consequences, shall be mentioned first. Fully one-third of the monikin species were scalded to death. A great many contracted asthmas and other diseases of the lungs by inhaling steam. Most of the bridges were swept away by the sudden melting of the snows, and large stores of provisions were spoiled by

the unexpected appearance and violent character of the thaw. These may be enumerated among the unpleasant consequences. Among the pleasant we esteem a final and agreeable melioration of the climate, which regained most of its ancient character, and a rapid and distinct elongation of our *caudæ* by a sudden acquisition of wisdom.

"The secondary, or the terrestrial consequences, were as follows: By the suddenness and force with which so much steam rushed into space, finding its outlet several degrees from the pole, the earth was canted from its perpendicular attitude, and remained fixed, with its axis having an inclination of 23° 27′ to the plane of its orbit. At the same time the the orb began to move in vacuum, and, restrained by antagonistic attractions, to perform what is called its annual revolution."

"I can very well understand, friend Reasono," observed Noah, "why the 'arth should heel under so sudden a thaw, though a well-ballasted ship would right again when the puff was over; but I cannot understand how a little steam leaking out at one end of a craft should set her agoing at the rate we are told this world travels?"

"If the escape of the steam were constant, the diurnal motion giving it every moment a new position, the earth would not be propelled in its orbit, of a certainty, Captain Poke; but as, in fact, this escape of the steam has the character of pulsation, being periodical and regular, nature has ordained that it shall occur but once in the twenty-four hours, and this at such a time as to render its action uniform, and its impulsion always in the same direction. The principle on which the earth receives this impetus can be easily illustrated by a familiar experiment. Take, for instance, a double-barreled fowling-piece, load both barrels with extra quantities of powder, introduce a ball and *two* wads into each barrel, place the breach within $4\frac{444}{1000}$ inches of the abdomen, and take care to fire both barrels at once. In this case the balls will give an example of the action of the forty thousand square miles of territory, and the person experimenting will not fail to imitate the impulsion, or the backward movement of the earth."

"While I do not deny that such an experiment would be likely to set both parties in motion, friend Reasono, I do not see why the 'arth should not finally stop, as the man would be sure to do, after he had got through with hopping and swearing."

"The reason why the earth, once set in motion in vacuum, does not stop, can also be elucidated by experiment, as follows: Take Captain Noah Poke, provided as he is by nature with legs and the power of motion; lead him to the *Place Vendome;* cause him to pay three sous, which will gain him admission to the base of the column; let him ascend to the summit; thence let him leap with all his energy, in a direction at right angles with the shaft of the column, into the open air; and it will be found that, though the original impulsion would not probably impel the body more than ten or twelve feet, motion would continue until it had reached the earth. Corollary: hence it is proved that all bodies in which the *vis inertia* has been overcome will continue in motion until they come in contact with some power capable of stopping them."

"King! Do you not think, Mr. Reasono, that the 'arth makes its circuit as much owing to this said steam of yours showing, as it were, always a little on one side, acting thereby in some fashion as a rudder, which causes her to keep wearing, as we seamen call it; and as big crafts take more room than small ones in wearing, why, she is compelled to run so many millions of miles before, as it were, she comes up to the wind ag'in? Now, there is reason in such an idee; whereas, I never could reconcile it to my natur', that these little bits of stars should keep a craft like the 'arth in her course, with such a devil of a way on her, as we know in reason she must have to run so far in a twelvemonth. Why, the smallest yaw — and, for a hooker of her keel a thousand miles wouldn't be a broader yaw than a hundred feet in a ship—the smallest yaw

would send her aboard of the Jupiter, or the Marcury, when there would be a smashing of out-board work such as mortal never before witnessed!"

"We rather lean to the opinion of the efficacy of attraction, sir; nor do I see that your proposition would at all obviate your own objection."

"Then, sir, I will just explain myself. Let us suppose there was a steamer with a hundred miles of keel; let us suppose the steam up, and the craft with a broad offing; let us suppose her helm lash'd hard aport, and she is going at the rate of ten thousand knots the hour, without bringing up or shortening sail for years at a time. Now, all this being admitted, what would be her course? Why, sir, any child could tell you she would keep turning in a circle of some fifty or a hundred thousand miles in circumference; and such, it appears to me it is much more rational to suppose, is the natur' of the 'arth's traversing, than all this steering-small among stars and attractions."

"There is truly something very plausible, Captain Poke, in your suggestion; and I propose that you shall profit by the first occasion to lay your opinions on the subject more at large before the Academy of Leaphigh."

"With all my heart, doctor; for I hold that knowledge, like good liquor, is given to be passed round from one to another, and not to be gulped in a corner by any particular individual. And now I'm throwing out hints of this natur', I will just intimate another, that you may add to your next demonstration, by way of what you call a corollary; which is this—that is to say—if all you tell us about the bursting of the boiler and the polar kick be true, then is the 'arth the first steamboat that was ever invented, and the boastings of the French, and the English, and the Spaniards, and Italians, on this point, are no more than so much smoke."

"And of the Americans, too, Captain Poke," I ventured to observe.

"Why, Sir John, that is as it may happen. I don't well see how Fulton could have stolen the idee, seeing that he did not know the doctor, and most probably never heard of Leaphigh in his life."

We all smiled, even to the amiable Chatterissa, at the nicety of the navigator's distinctions; and the philosopher's lecture, in its more didactic form, being now virtually at an end, a long and desultory conversation took place, in which a multitude of ingenious questions were put by Captain Poke and myself, and which were as cleverly answered by the doctor and his friends.

At length, Dr. Reasono, who, philosopher as he was, and much as he loved science, had not given himself all this trouble without a view to what are called ulterior considerations, came out with a frank *exposé* of his wishes. Accident had apparently combined all the means for gratifying the burning desire I betrayed to be let into further details of the monikin polity, morals, philosophy, and all the other great social interests of the part of the world they inhabit. I was wealthy beyond bounds, and the equipment of a proper vessel would be an expenditure of no moment; but the doctor and Lord Chatterino were good practical geographers, after they were once within the parallel of 77° south, and Captain Poke, according to his own account of himself, had passed half his life in poking about among the sterile and uninhabited islands of the frozen ocean. What was there to prevent the most earnest wishes of all present from being gratified? The captain was out of employment, and no doubt would be glad to get the command of a good tight sea-boat; the strangers pined for home, and it was my most ardent wish to increase my stake in society by taking a further interest in monikins.

On this hint I frankly made a proposal to the old sealer, to undertake the task of restoring these amiable and enlightened strangers to their own firesides and families. The captain soon began to discover a little of his Stunin'tun propensity; for the more I pressed the matter on him, the more readily he found objections. The several motives he urged for declining the proposal may be succinctly given as follows:

It was true that he wanted employment, but then he wanted to see Stunin'tun, too; he doubted whether monkeys would make good sailors; it was no joke to run in among the ice, and it might be still less of one to find our way back again; he had seen the bodies of dead seals and bears that were frozen as hard as stone, and which might, for anything he knew, have lain in that state a hundred years, and, for his part, he should like to be buried when he was good for nothing else; how did he know these monikins might not catch the men, when they had once fairly got them in their country, and strip them, and make them throw somersaults, as the Savoyards had compelled the doctor, and even the Lady Chatterissa, to do?—he knew he should break his neck the first flapjack; if he were ten years younger, perhaps he should like the frolic; he did not believe the right sort of craft could be found in England, and, for his part, he liked sailing under the stars and stripes; he didn't know but he might go if he had a crew of Stunin'tuners; he always knew how to get along with such people; he could scare one by threatening to tell his *marm* how he behaved, and bring another to reason by hinting that the gals would shy him if he wasn't more accommodating; then there might be no such place as Leaphigh, after all; or, if there was, he might never find it; as for wearing a bison skin under the equator, it was quite out of the question, a human skin being a heavy load to carry in the calm latitudes; and finally, that he didn't exactly see what he was to get by it.

These objections were met, one by one, reversing the order in which they were made, and commencing with the last.

I offered a thousand pounds sterling as the reward. This proposal brought a gleam of satisfaction into Noah's eyes, though he shook his head, as if he thought it very little. It was then suggested that there was no doubt we should discover certain islands that were well stored with seals, and that I would waive all claims as owner, and that hereafter he might turn these discoveries to his own private account. At this bait he nibbled, and, at one time, I thought he was about to suffer himself to be caught. But he remained obstinate. After trying all our united rhetoric, and doubling the amount of the pecuniary offer, Dr. Reasono luckily bethought him of the universal engine of human weakness, and the old sealer, who had resisted money—an influence of known efficacy at Stunin'tun—ambition, the secret of new sealing grounds, and all the ordinary inducements that might be thought to have weight with men of his class, was, in the end, hooked by his own vanity!

The philosopher cunningly expatiated on the pleasure there would be in reading a paper before the Academy of Leaphigh, on the subject of the captain's peculiar views touching the earth's annual revolution, and of the virtue of sailing planets, with their helms lashed hard aport, when all the dogmatical old navigator's scruples melted away like snow in a thaw.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CHAPTER OF PREPARATIONS — DISCRIMINATION IN CHARACTER — A TIGHT FIT, AND OTHER CONVENIENCES, WITH SOME JUDGMENT.

I SHALL pass lightly over the events of the succeeding month. During this time the whole party were transferred to England, a proper ship had been bought and equipped, the family of strangers were put in quiet possession of their cabins, and I had made all my arrangements for being absent from England for the next two years. The vessel was a stout-built, comfortable ship of about three hundred tons burden, and had been properly constructed to encounter the dangers of the ice. Her accommodations were suitably arranged to meet all the exigencies of both monikin and human wants, the apartments of the ladies being very properly separated from those of the gentlemen, and otherwise rendered decorous and commodious. The lady Chatterissa very pleasantly called their private room the *gynécée*, which, as I afterward ascer-

tained, was a term for the women's apartments, obtained from the Greek, the monikins being quite as much addicted as we are ourselves to showing their acquirements by the introduction of words from foreign tongues.

Noah showed great care in the selection of the ship's company, the service being known to be arduous, and the duties of a very responsible character. For this purpose he made a journey expressly to Liverpool (the ship lying in the Greenland Dock at London), where he was fortunate enough to engage five Yankees, as many Englishmen, two Norwegians, and a Swede, all of whom had been accustomed to cruising as near the poles as ordinary men ever succeed in reaching. He was also well suited in his cook and mates; but I observed that he had great difficulty in finding a cabin-boy to his mind. More than twenty applicants were rejected, some for the want of one qualification, and some for the want of another. As I was present at several examinations of different candidates for the office, I got a little insight into his manner of ascertaining their respective merits.

The invariable practice was, first, to place a bottle of rum and a pitcher of water before the lad, and to order him to try his hand at mixing a glass of grog. Four applicants were incontinently rejected for manifesting a natural inaptitude at hitting the *juste milieu* in this important part of the duty of a cabin-boy. Most of the candidates, however, were reasonably expert in the art; and the captain soon came to the next requisite, which was to say "Sir," in a tone, as Noah expressed it, somewhere between the snap of a steel-trap and the mendicant whine of a beggar. Fourteen were rejected for deficiencies on this score, the captain remarking that most of them "were the sa'ciest blackguards" he had ever fallen in with. When he had, at length, found one who could mix a tumbler of grog, and answer "Sir," to his liking, he proceeded to make experiments on their abilities in carrying a soup-tureen over a slushed plank; in wiping plates without a napkin, and without using their shirt-sleeves; in snuffing candles with their fingers; in making a soft bed with few materials besides boards; in mixing the various compounds of burgoo, lobscous, and dough (which he affectedly pronounced *duff*); in fattening pigs on beef-bones, and ducks on the sweepings of the deck; in looking at molasses without licking his lips; and in various other similar accomplishments, which he maintained were as familiar to the children of Stunnin'tun as their singing-books and the ten commandments. The nineteenth candidate, to my uninstructed eyes seemed perfect; but Noah rejected him for the want of a quality that he declared was indispensable to the quiet of the ship. It appeared that he was too bony about an essential part of his anatomy, a peculiarity that was very dangerous to a captain, as he himself was once so unfortunate as to put his great toe out of joint by kicking one of those ill-formed youngsters with unpremeditated violence; a thing that was very apt to happen to a man in a hurry. Luckily, No. 20 passed, and was immediately promoted to the vacant berth. The very next day the ship put to sea, in good condition, and with every prospect of a fortunate voyage.

I will here state that a general election occurred the week before we sailed; and I ran down to Householder and got myself returned, in order to protect the interests of those who had a natural right to look up to me for that small favor.

We discharged the pilot when we had the Scilly Islands over the taffrail, and Mr. Poke took command of the vessel in good earnest. Coming down channel he had done little more than rummage about in the cabin, examine the lockers, and make his foot acquainted with the anatomy of poor Bob, as the cabin-boy was called; who, judging from the amount of the captain's practice, was admirably well suited for his station in the great requisite of a kickee. But, the last hold of the land loosened by the departure of the pilot, our navigator came forth in his true colors, and showed the stuff of which he was really made. The first thing he did was to cause a pull to be made on

every halyard, bowline and brace in the ship; he then rattled off both mates, in order to show them (as he afterward told me in confidence) that he was captain of his own vessel; gave the people to understand that he did not like to speak twice on the same subject and on the same occasion, which he said was a privilege he very willingly left to Congressmen and women; and then he appeared satisfied with himself and all around him.

A week after we had taken our departure I ventured to ask Captain Poke if it might not be well enough to take an observation, and to resort to some means in order to know where the ship was. Noah treated this idea with great disrespect. He could see no use in wearing out quadrants without any necessity for it. Our course was south we knew, for we were bound to the south pole; all we had to do was to keep America on the starboard, and Africa on the larboard hand. To be sure, there was something to be said about the trades, and a little allowance to be made for currents now and then; but he and the ship would get to be better acquainted before a great while, and then all would go on like clockwork. A few days after this conversation I was on deck just as day dawned, and to my surprise Noah, who was in his berth, called out to the mate, through the sky-light, to let him know exactly how the land bore. No one had yet seen any land; but at this summons we began to look about us, and sure enough there was an island dimly visible on the eastern board! Its position by compass was immediately communicated to the captain, who seemed well satisfied with the result. Renewing his admonition to the officer of the deck to take care and keep Africa on the larboard hand, he turned over in his bed to resume his nap.

I afterward understood from the mates, that we had made a very capital fall upon the trades, and that we were getting on wonderfully well, though it was quite as great a mystery to them as it was to me, how the captain could know where the ship was; for he had not touched his quadrant, except to wipe it with a silk handkerchief, since we left England. About a fortnight after we had passed the Cape de Verds, Noah came on deck in a great rage, and began to storm at the mate and the man at the wheel for not keeping the ship on her course. To this the former answered with spirit, that the only order he had received in a fortnight was "to keep her jogging south, allowing for variation," and that she was heading at that moment according to orders. Hereupon, Noah gave Bob, who happened to pass him just then, a smart application *à posteriori*, and swore "that the compass was as big a fool as the mate; that the ship was two points off her course; that south was hereaway, and not thereaway; that he knew by the feel of the wind that it had no northin' in it, and we had got it away on the quarter, whereas it ought to be for'ard of the beam; that we were running for Rio instead of Leaphigh, and that if we ever expected to get to the latter country we must haul up on a good taut bowline." The mate, to my surprise, suddenly acquiesced, and immediately brought the ship by the wind. He afterward told me, in a half whisper, that the second mate, having been sharpening some harpoons, had unwittingly left them much too close to the binnacle; and that, in fact, the magnet had been attracted by them, so as to deceive the man at the wheel and himself fully twenty degrees as to the real points of the compass. I must say this little occurrence greatly encouraged me, leaving no doubt about our eventual and safe arrival, as far, at least, as the boundary of ice which separates the human from the monikin region. Profiting by this feeling of security, I now began to revive the intercourse with the strangers, which had been partially interrupted by the novel and disagreeable circumstances of a sea life.

The Lady Chatterissa, and her companion, as is much the case with females at sea, rarely left the *gynecee*; but as we drew near the equator the philosopher and the young peer passed most of their time on deck, or aloft. Dr. Reasono and I spent half of the mild nights in discussing subjects connected with my future

travels; and, as soon as we were well clear of the rain and the thunder and lightning of the calm latitudes, Captain Poke, Robert, and myself began to study the language of Leaphigh. The cabin-boy was included in this arrangement, Noah intimating we should find it convenient to take him on shore with us, since a wish to conceal my destination had induced me to bring no servant along. Luckily for us, the monikin ingenuity had greatly diminished the labor of the acquisition. The whole language was spoken and written on a system of decimals, which rendered it particularly easy after the elementary principles were once acquired Thus, unlike most human tongues, in which the rule usually forms the exception, no departure from its laws was ever allowed, under the penalty of the pillory. This provision, the captain protested, was the best rule of them all, and saved a vast deal of trouble; for, as he knew by experience, a man might be a perfect adept in the language of Stunnin'tun, and then be laughed at in New York for his pains. The comprehensiveness of the tongue was also another great advantage; though, like all other eminent advantages or excessive good, it was the next-door neighbor to as great an evil. Thus, as my Lord Chatterino, obligingly explained, "*we-witch-it-me-cum,*" means, "Madam, I love you from the crown of my head to the tip of my tail; and as I love no other half as well, it would make me the happiest monikin on earth, if you would consent to become my wife, that we might be models of domestic propriety before all eyes, from this time henceforth and forever."

In short, it was the usual and most solemn expression for asking in marriage; and, by the laws of the land, was binding on the proposer until as formally declined by the other party. But, unluckily, the word, "we-switch-it-me-cum," means, "Madam, I love you from the crown of my head to the tip of my tail; and, *if I did not love another better,* it would make me the happiest monikin on earth, if you would consent to become my wife, that we might be models of domestic propriety before all eyes, from this time henceforth and forever." Now this distinction, subtle and insignificant as it was to the eye and the ear, caused a vast deal of heart-burning and disappointment among the young people of Leaphigh. Several serious lawsuits had grown out of this cause, and two great political parties had taken root in the unfortunate mistake of a young monikin of quality, who happened to lisp, and who used the fatal word indiscreetly. That feud, however, was now happily appeased, having lasted only a century; but it would be wise, as we were all three bachelors, to take note of the distinction. Captain Poke said he thought, on the whole, he was perfectly safe, as he was much accustomed to the use of the word "*switched;*" but he thought it might be very well to go before some consul as soon as the ship anchored and enter a formal protest of our ignorance of all these niceties, lest some advantage should be taken of us by the reptiles of lawyers; that he in particular was not a bachelor, and that Miss Poke would be as furious as a hurricane if by an accident he should happen to forget himself. The matter was deferred for future deliberation.

About this time, too, I had some more interesting communications with Dr. Reasono on the subject of the private histories of all the party of which he was the principal member. It would seem that the philosopher, though rich in learning, and the proprietor of one of the best developed *caudæ* in the entire monikin world, was poor in the more vulgar attributes of monikin wealth. While he bestowed freely, therefore, from the stores of his philosophy, and through the medium of the Academy of Leaphigh, on all his fellows, he was obliged to seek an especial recipient for his surplus knowledge in the shape of a pupil, in order to provide for the small remains of the animal that still lingered in his habits. Lord Chatterino, the orphan heritor of one of the noblest and wealthiest, as well as one of the most ancient houses of Leaphigh, had been put under his instruction at a very tender age, as had my Lady Chatterissa under that of Mrs. Lynx, with very much the

same objects. This young and accomplished pair had early distinguished each other, in monikin society, for their unusual graces of person, general attainments, mutual amiableness of disposition, harmony of thought, and soundness of principles. Everything was propitious to the gentle flame which was kindled in the vestal bosom of Chatterissa, and which was met by a passion so ardent and so respectful as that which glowed in the heart of young No. 8 purple. The friends of the respective parties, so soon as the budding sympathy between them was observed, in order to prevent the blight of wishes so appropriate, had called in the aid of the matrimonial surveyor-general of Leaphigh, an officer especially appointed by the king in council, whose duty it is to take cognizance of the proprieties of all engagements that are likely to assume a character as grave and durable as that of marriage. Dr. Reasono showed me the certificate issued from the Marriage Department on this occasion, and which in all his wanderings he had contrived to conceal within the lining of the Spanish hat the Savoyards had compelled him to wear, and which he still preserved as a document that was absolutely indispensable to his return to Leaphigh; else he would never be permitted to travel afoot in company with two young people of birth and of good estates who were of the different sexes. I translate the certificate as literally as the poverty of the English language will allow:

EXTRACT from the Book of Fitness, Marriage Department, Leaphigh, season of nuts, day of brightness.

Vol. 7,243, p. 82.

Lord Chatterino: Domains; 126,952¾ acres of land; meadow, arable and wood in just proportions.

Lady Chatterissa; Domains; 115,999½ acres of land; mostly arable.

Decree, as of record; it is found that the lands of my Lady Chatterissa possess in quality what they want in quantity.

Lord Chatterino: Birth; sixteen descents pure—one bastardy—four descents pure—a suspicion—one descent pure—a certainty.

Lady Chatterissa: Birth; six descents pure — three bastardies—eleven descents pure—a certainty—a suspicion—unknown.

Decree, as of record; it is found that the advantage is on the side of my Lord Chatterino, but the excellence of the estate on the other side is believed to equalize the parties.

(Signed) No. 6 ermine. A true copy.

(Countersigned) No. 1,100,003 ink-color.

Ordered, that the parties make the Journey of Trial together, under the charge of Socrates Reasono, Professor of Probabilities in the University of Leaphigh, LL.D., F. U. D. G. E., and of Mrs. Vigilance Lynx, licensed duenna.

The Journey of Trial is so peculiar to the monikin system, and it might be so usefully introduced into our own, that it may be well to explain it. Whenever it is found that a young couple are agreeable (to use a peculiarly anglicized anglicism), in all the more essential requisites of matrimony, they are sent on the journey in question, under the care of prudent and experienced mentors, with a view to ascertain how far they may be able to support, in each other's society, the ordinary vicissitudes of life. In the case of candidates of the more vulgar classes, there are official overseers, who usually drag them through a few mud-puddles, and then set them to work at some hard labor that is especially profitable to the public functionaries, who commonly get the greater part of their own year's work done in this manner. But, as the moral provisions of all laws are invented less for those who own 126,952¾ acres of land, divided into meadow, arable and wood, in just proportions, than for those whose virtues are more likely to yield to the fiery ordeal of temptation, the rich and noble, after making a proper and useful manifestation of their compliance with the usage, ordinarily retire to their country seats, where they pass the period of probation as agreeably as they can; taking care to cause to be inserted in the "Leaphigh Gazette," however, occasional

extracts from their letters, describing the pains and hardships they are compelled to endure, for the consolation and edification of those who have neither birth nor country houses. In a good many instances the journey is actually performed by proxy. But the case of my Lord Chatterino and my Lady Chatterissa formed an exception even to these exceptions. It was thought by the authorities that the attachment of a pair so illustrious offered a good occasion to distinguish the Leaphigh impartiality; and, on the well-known principle which induces us sometimes to hang an earl in England, the young couple were commanded actually to go forth with all useful éclat (secret orders being given to their guardians to allow every possible indulgence, at the same time), in order that the lieges might see and exult in the sternness and integrity of their rules.

Dr. Reasono had accordingly taken his departure from the capital for the mountains, where he instructed his wards in a practical commentary of the ups and downs of life, by exposing them on the verges of precipices and in the delights of the most fertile valleys (which, as he justly observed, was the greater danger of the two), leading them over flinty paths, hungry and cold, in order to try their tempers; and setting up establishments with the most awkward peasants for servants, to ascertain the depth of Chatterissa's philosophy; with a variety of similar ingenious devices that will readily suggest themselves to all who have any matrimonial experience, whether they live in palaces or cottages. When this part of the trial was successfully terminated (the result having shown that the gentle Chatterissa was of proof, so far as mere temper was concerned), the whole party were ordered off to the barrier of ice which divides the monikin from the human region, with a view to ascertain whether the warmth of their attachment was of a nature likely to resist the freezing collisions of the world. Here, unfortunately (for the truth must be said), an unlucky desire of Dr. Reasono, who was already F. U. D. G. E,, but who had a devouring ambition to become also M. O. R. E., led him into the extreme imprudence of pushing through an opening where he had formerly discovered an island on an ancient expedition of the same sort; and on which island he thought he saw a rock, that formed a stratum of what he believed to be a portion of the forty thousand square miles that were discomposed by the great eruption of the earth's boiler.

The philosopher foresaw a thousand interesting results that were dependent on the ascertaining of this important fact; for all the learning of Leaphigh having been exhausted some five hundred years before in establishing the *greatest* distance to which any fragment had been thrown on that memorable occasion, great attention had latterly been given to the discovery of the *least* distance any fragment had been hurled. Perhaps I ought to speak tenderly of the consequences of a learned zeal, but it was entirely owing to this indiscretion that the whole party fell into the hands of certain mariners who were sealing on the northern shores of this very island (friends and neighbors, as it afterward appeared, of Captain Poke), who remorselessly seized upon the travelers, and sold them to a homeward-bound Indiaman, which they afterward fell in with near the island of St. Helena—St. Helena! the tomb of him who is a model to all posterity, for the moderation of his desires, the simplicity of his character, a deep veneration for truth, profound reverence for justice, unwavering faith, and a clear appreciation of all the nobler virtues.

We came in sight of the island in question, just as Dr. Reasono concluded his interesting narrative; and, turning to Captain Poke, I solemnly asked that discerning and shrewd seaman—

"If he did not think the future would fully avenge itself of the past—if history would not do ample justice to the mighty dead—if certain names would not be consigned to everlasting infamy for chaining a hero to a rock; and whether *his* country, the land of freemen, would ever have disgraced itself by such an act of barbarism and vengeance?"

The captain heard me very calmly; then

deliberately helping himself to some tobacco, he replied—

"Harkee, Sir John. At Stunnin'tun, when we catch a ferocious critter', we always put it in a cage. I'm no great mathematician, as I've often told you; but if my dog bites me once, I kick him — twice, I beat him — thrice, I chain him."

Alas! there are minds so unfortunately constituted that they have no sympathies with the sublime. All their tendencies are direct and common-sense like. To such men, Napoleon appears little better than one who lived among his fellows more in the character of a tiger than in that of a man. They condemn him because he could not reduce his own sense of the attributes of greatness to the level of their home-bred morality. Among this number, it would now seem, was to be classed Captain Noah Poke.

A wish to relate the manner in which Dr. Reasono and his companions fell into human hands, has caused me to overlook one or two matters of lighter moment, that should not, in justice to myself, however, be entirely omitted.

When we had been at sea two days, a very agreeable surprise for the monikin party was prepared and executed. I had caused a certain number of jackets and trousers to be made of the skins of different animals, such as dogs, cats, sheep, tigers, leopards, hogs, etc., etc., with the proper accompaniments of snouts, hoofs, and claws; and, when the ladies came on deck, after breakfast, their eyes were no longer offended by our rude innovations upon nature, but the whole crew were flying about the rigging, like so many animals of the different species named. Noah and myself appeared in the characters of sea-lions, the former having intimated that he understood the nature of that beast better than any other. Of course, this delicate attention was properly appreciated, and handsomely acknowledged.

I had taken the precaution to order imitation-skins to be made of cotton, which were worn in the low latitudes; and, as we got near the Falkland Islands, the real skins were resumed, with promptitude, and I might add, with pleasure.

Noah had, at first, raised some objections to the scheme, saying that he should not feel safe in a ship manned and officered altogether by wild beasts; but, at last, he came to enjoy the thing as a good joke, never failing to hail the men, not by their names as formerly, but, as he expressed it himself, "by their natures"; calling out "You cat, scratch this"; "You tiger, jump here"; "You hog, out of that dirt"; "You dog, scamper there"; "You horse, haul away," and divers other similar conceits, that singularly tickled his fancy. The men themselves took up the ball, which they kept rolling, embellished with all sorts of nautical witticisms; their surname—they had but one, viz., Smith—being entirely dropped for the new appellations. Thus, the sounds of "Tom Dog," "Jack Cat," "Bill Tiger," "Sam Hog," and "Dick Horse," were flying about the decks from morning to night.

Good humor is a great alleviator of bodily privation. From the time the ship lost sight of Staten Land, we had heavy weather, with hard gales from the southward and westward; and we had the utmost difficulty in making our southing. Observations now became a very difficult matter, the sun being invisible for a week at a time. The marine instinct of Noah, at this crisis, was of the last importance to all on board. He gave us the cheering assurance, however, from time to time, that we were going south, although the mates declared that they knew not where the ship was, or whither she was running; neither sun, moon, nor star having now been seen for more than a week.

We had been in this state of anxiety and doubt for about a fortnight, when Captain Poke suddenly appeared on deck, and called for the cabin-boy, in his usual stentorian and no-denial voice, by the name of "You Bob Ape"; for the duty of Robert requiring that he should be much about the persons of the monikins, I had given him a dress of apes' skins, as a garb that would be more congenial to their tastes than that of a pig or a weasel.

Bob Ape was soon forthcoming, and, as he approached his master, he quietly turned his face from him, receiving, as a matter of course, three or four smart admonitory hints, by way of letting him know that he was to be active in the performance of the duty on which he was about to be sent. On this occasion I made an odd discovery. Bob had profited by the dimensions of his lower garment, which had been cut for a much larger boy (one of those who had broken down in essaying the true Doric of "Sir") by stuffing it with an old union-jack—a sort of "sarvice," as he afterward told me, that saved him a good deal of wear and tear of skin. To return to passing events, however; when Robert had been duly kicked, he turned about manfully, and demanded the captain's pleasure. He was told to bring the largest and fairest pumpkin he could find, from the private stores of Mr. Poke, the navigator never going to sea without a store of articles that he termed "Stunnin'tun food." The captain took the pumpkin between his legs, and carefully peeled off the whole of its greenish-yellow coat, leaving it a globe of a whitish color. He then asked for the tar bucket; and with his finger, traced various marks, which were pretty accurate outlines of the different continents and the larger islands of the world. The region near the south pole, however, he left untouched; intimating that it contained certain sealing-islands, which he considered pretty much as the private property of the Stunnin'tunners.

"Now, Doctor," he said, pointing to the pumpkin, "there is the 'arth, and here is the tar-pot—just mark down the position of your island of Leaphigh, if you please, according to the best accounts your academy has of the matter. Make a dab here and there, if you happen to know of any rocks and shoals. After that, you can lay down the island where you were captured, giving a general idee of its headlands and of the trending of the coast."

Dr. Reasono took a fid, and with its end he traced all the desired objects with great readiness and skill. Noah examined the work, and seemed satisfied that he had fallen into the hands of a monikin who had very correct notions of bearings and distances, one, in short, on whose local knowledge it might do to run even in the night. He then projected the position of Stunnin'tun, an occupation in which he took great delight, actually designing the meeting-house and the principal tavern; after which, the chart was laid aside.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW TO STEER SMALL—HOW TO RUN THE GAUNTLET WITH A SHIP—HOW TO GO CLEAR—A NEW-FASHIONED SCREW-DOCK, AND CERTAIN MILE-STONES.

Captain Poke no longer deliberated about the course we were to steer. With his pumpkin for a chart, his instinct for an observation, and his nose for a compass, the sturdy sealer stood boldly to the southward, or, at least, he ran dead before a stiff gale, which, as he more than once affirmed, was as true a norther as if bred and born in the Canadas.

After coursing over the billows at a tremendous rate, for a day and a night, the captain appeared on deck, with a face of unusual meaning, and a mind loaded with its own reflections, as was proved by his winking knowingly whenever he delivered himself of a sentiment; a habit that he had most probably contracted, in early youth, at Stunnin'tun, for it seemed to be quite as inveterate as it was thorough-bred.

"We shall soon know, Sir John," he observed, hitching the sea-lion skin into symmetry, "whether it is sink or swim!"

"Pray explain yourself, Mr. Poke," cried I, in a little alarm. "If anything serious is to happen, you are bound to give timely notice."

"Death is always untimely to some critturs, Sir John."

"Am I to understand, sir, that you mean to cast away the ship?"

"Not if I can help it, Sir John; but a craft that is foreordained to be a wrack, will be a wrack, in spite of reefing and

bracing. Look ahead, you Dick Lion—ay, there you have it!"

There we had it, sure enough! I can only compare the scene which now met my eyes, to a sudden view of the range of the Oberland Alps, when the spectator is unexpectedly placed on the verge of the precipice of the Weissenstein. There he would see before him a boundless barrier of glittering ice, broken into the glorious and fantastic forms of pinnacles, walls and valleys; while here, we saw all that was sublime in such a view heightened by the fearful action of the boisterous ocean, which beat upon the impassable boundary in ceaseless violence.

"Good God! Captain Poke," I exclaimed, the instant I caught a glimpse of the formidable danger that menaced us, "you surely do not mean to continue madly on, with such a warning of the consequences in plain view?"

"What would you have, Sir John? Leaphigh lies on the t'other side of these ice-islands!"

"But you need not run the ship against them—why not go round them?"

"Because *they* go round the 'arth, in this latitude. Now is the time to speak, Sir John. If we are bound to Leaphigh, we have the choice of three pretty desperate chances; to go through, to go under, or to go over that there ice. If we are to put back, there is not a moment to lose, for it may be even now questioned whether the ship would claw off, as we are, with a sending sea, and this heavy norther."

I believe I would, at that moment, gladly have given up all my social stakes to be well rid of the adventure. Still pride, that substitute for so many virtues, the greatest and the most potent of all hypocrites, forbade my betraying the desire to retreat. I deliberated, while the ship flew; and when, at length, I turned to the captain to suggest a doubt that might, at an earlier notice, possibly have changed the whole aspect of affairs, he bluntly told me it was too late. It was safer to proceed than to return, if indeed, return were possible, in the present state of the winds and waves. Making a merit of necessity, I braced my nerves to meet the crisis, and remained a submissive, and, apparently, a calm spectator of that which followed.

The *Walrus* (such was the name of our good ship) by this time was under easy canvas, and yet, urged by the gale, she rolled down with alarming velocity toward the boundary of foam where the congealed and the still liquid element held their strife. The summits of the frozen crags waved in their glittering glory in a way just to show that they were afloat; and I remembered to have heard that, at times, as their bases melted, entire mountains had been known to roll over, ingulfing all that lay beneath. To me it seemed but a moment, before the ship was fairly overshadowed by these shining cliffs, which, gently undulating, waved their frozen summits nearly a thousand feet in air. I looked at Noah in alarm, for it appeared to me that he intentionally precipitated us to destruction. But, just as I was about to remonstrate, he made a sign with his hand, and the vessel was brought to the wind. Still retreat was impossible; for the heave of the sea was too powerful, and the wind too heavy, to leave us any hope of long keeping the *Walrus* from drifting down upon the ragged peaks that bristled in icy glory to leeward. Nor did Captain Poke himself seem to entertain any such design; for, instead of hugging the gale, in order to haul off from the danger, he had caused the yards to be laid perfectly square, and we were now running, at a great rate, in a line nearly parallel with the frozen coast, though gradually setting upon it.

"Keep full! Let her go through water, you Jim Tiger," said the old sealer, whose professional ardor was fairly aroused. "Now, Sir John, unluckily, we are on the wrong side of these ice mountains, for the plain reason that Leaphigh lies to the south'ard of them. We must be stirring, therefore, for no craft that was ever launched could keep off these crags with such a gale driving home upon them, for more than an hour or two. Our great concern, at present, is to look out for a hole to run into."

"Why have you come so close to the danger with your knowledge of the consequences?"

"To own the truth, Sir John, natur' is natur', and I'm getting to be a little near-sighted as I grow old; besides, I'm not so sartain that danger is the more dangerous, for taking a good, steady look plump in its face."

Noah raised his hand, as much as to say he wished no answer, and both of us were immediately occupied in gazing anxiously to leeward. The ship was just opening a small cove in the ice, which might have been a cable's length in depth, and a quarter of a mile across its outer or the widest part. Its form was regular, being that of a semi-circle; but, at its bottom, the ice, instead of forming a continued barrier like all the rest we had yet passed, was separated by a narrow opening that was bounded on each side by a frowning precipice. The two bergs were evidently drawing nearer to each other, but there was still a strait or a watery gorge between them of some two hundred feet in width. As the ship plunged onward the pass was opened and we caught a glimpse of the distant view to leeward. It was merely a glimpse—the impatient *Walrus* allowing us but a moment for examination—but it appeared sufficient for the purposes of the old sealer. We were already across the mouth of the cove and within a cable's length of the ice again; for as we drew near what may be called the little cape, we found ourselves once more in closer proximity to the menacing mountain. It was a moment when all depended on decision; and fortunately, our sealer, who was so wary and procrastinating in a bargain, never had occasion to make two drafts on his thoughts in situations of emergency.

As the ship cleared the promontory on the eastern side of the cove, we again opened a curvature of the ice, which gave a little more water to leeward. Tacking was impossible, and the helm was put hard a-weather. The bow of the *Walrus* feel off, and as she rose on the next wave I thought its descent would carry us helplessly down upon the berg. But the good craft, obedient to her rudder, whirled round, as if sensible herself of the danger, and in less time than I had ever before known her to wear, we felt the wind on the other quarter. Our cats and dogs bestirred themselves, for there was no one there, Captain Noah Poke excepted, whose heart did not beat quick and hard. In much less time than usual, the yards were braced up on the other tack, and the ship was plowing heavily against the sea, with her head to the westward. It is impossible to give one who has never been in such a situation, a just idea of the feverish impatience, the sinking and mounting of hope, as we watch the crab-like movements of a vessel that is clawing off a lee-shore, in a gale. In the present case, it being well known that the sea was fathomless, we had run so near the danger that not even the smallest of its horrors was veiled from sight.

While the ship labored along, I saw the clouds fast shutting into windward, by the interposition of the promontory of ice—the certain sign that our drift was rapid—and, as we drew nearer to the point, breathing became labored and even audible. Here Noah took a chew of tobacco, I presume on the principle of enjoying a last quid, should the elements prove fatal; and then he went to the wheel in person.

"Let her go through the water," he said, easing the helm a little—"let her jog ahead, or we shall lose command of her in this devil's-pot!"

The vessel felt the slight change, and drew faster through the foaming brine, bringing us, with increasing velocity, nearer to the dreaded point. As we came up to the promontory the water fell back in spray on the decks, and there was an instant when it appeared as if the wind was about to desert us. Happily the ship had drawn so far ahead as to feel the good effects of a slight change of current that was caused by the air rushing obliquely into the cove; and, as Noah, by easing the helm still more, had anticipated this alteration, which had been felt adversely but a moment before, while struggling to the eastward of the promontory, we drew swiftly past the icy cape, opening the cove

handsomely with the ship's head falling off fast toward the gorge.

There was but a minute or two, for squaring the yards and obtaining the proper position to the windward of the narrow strait. Instead of running down in a direct line for the latter, Captain Poke kept the ship on such a course as to lay it well open, before her head was pointed toward the passage. By this time, the two bergs had drawn so near each other as actually to form an arch across its mouth; and this, too, at a part so low as to render it questionable whether there was sufficient elevation to permit the *Walrus* to pass beneath. But retreat was impossible, the gale urging the ship furiously onward. The width of the passage was now but little more than a hundred feet, and it actually required the nicest steerage to keep our yard-arms clear of the opposite precipices, as the vessel dashed, with foaming bows, into the gorge. The wind drew through the opening with tremendous violence, fairly howling, as if in delight of discovering a passage by which it might continue its furious career. We may have been aided by the sucking of the wind and waves, both of which were irresistibly drawn toward the pass, or it is quite probable that the skill of Captain Poke did us good service on this awful occasion; but, owing to the one or the other, or to the two causes united, the *Walrus* shot into the gorge so accurately, as to avoid touching either of the lateral margins of the ice. We were not so fortunate, however, with the loftier spars; for scarcely was the vessel beneath the arch, when she lifted on a swell, and her main-top-gallant-mast snapped off in the cap. The ice groaned and cracked over our heads, and large fragments fell both ahead and astern of us, several of them even tumbling upon our decks. One large piece came down within an inch of the extremity of Dr. Reasono's tail, just escaping the dire calamity of knocking out the brains of that profound and philo-monikin philosopher. In another instant the ship was through the pass, which completely closed, with the crash of an earthquake, as soon as possible afterward.

Still driven by the gale, we ran rapidly toward the south, along a channel less than a quarter of a mile in width, the bergs evidently closing on each side of us, and the ship, as if conscious of her jeopardy, doing her utmost, with Captain Poke still at the wheel. In little more than an hour the worst was over—the *Walrus* issuing into an open basin of several leagues in extent, which was, however, completely encircled by the frozen mountains. Here Noah took a look at the pumpkin, after which he made no ceremony in plumply telling Dr. Reasono that he had been greatly mistaken in laying down the position of Captivity Island, as he himself had named the spot where the amiable strangers had fallen into human hands. The philosopher was a little tenacious of his opinion; but what is argument in the face of facts? Here was the pumpkin, and there were the blue waters! The captain now quite frankly declared that he had great doubts whether there was any such place as Leaphigh at all; and as the ship had a capital position for such an object, he bluntly, though privately, proposed to me that we should throw all the monikins overboard, project the entire polar basin on his chart as being entirely free from islands, and then go a-sealing. I rejected the propositions, first, as premature; secondly, as inhuman; thirdly, as inhospitable; fourthly, as inconvenient, and lastly, as impracticable.

There might have arisen a disagreeable controversy between us on this point; for Mr. Poke had begun to warm, and to swear that one good seal, of the true quality of fur, was worth a hundred monkeys; when most happily the panther at the masthead cried out that two of the largest mountains to the southward of us were separating, and that he could discern a passage into another basin. Hereupon Captain Poke concentrated his oaths, which he caused to explode like a bomb, and instantly made sail again in the proper direction. By three o'clock, P.M., we had run the gauntlet of the bergs a second time, and were at least a degree nearer the pole, in the basin just alluded to.

The mountains had now entirely disap-

peared in the southern board; but the sea was covered, far as the eye could reach; with field-ice. Noah stood on, without apprehension; for the water had been smooth ever since we entered the first opening, the wind not having rake enough to knock up a swell. When about a mile from the margin of the frozen and seemingly interminable plain, the ship was brought to the wind, and hove to.

Ever since the vessel left the docks, there had been six sets of spars of a form so singular, lying among the booms, that they had often been the subject of conversation between the mates and myself, neither of the former being able to tell their uses. These sticks were of no great length, some fifteen feet at the most, of sound English oak. Two or three pairs were alike, for they were in pairs, each pair having one of the sides of a shape resembling different parts of the ship's bottom, with the exception that they were chiefly concave, while the bottom of a vessel is mainly convex. At one extremity each pair was firmly connected by a short, massive iron link, of about two feet in length; and at its opposite end, a large eye-bolt was driven into each stick, where it was securely forelocked. When the *Walrus* was stationary, we learned, for the first time, the uses of these unusual preparations. A pair of the timbers, which were of great solidity and strength, were dropped over the stern, and, sinking beneath the keel, their upper extremities were separated by means of lanyards turned into the eye-bolts. The lanyards were then brought forward to the bilge of the vessel, where, by the help of tackles, the timbers were roused up in such a manner that the links came close to the false keel, and the timbers themselves were laid snug against each side of the ship.

As great care had been taken, by means of marks on the vessel, as well as in forming the skids themselves, the fit was perfect. No less than five pairs were secured in and near the bilge, and as many more were distributed forward and aft, according to the shape of the bottom. Fore-and-aft pieces, that reached from one to the other, were then placed between those about the bilge of the ship, each of them having a certain number of short ribs, extending upward and downward. These fore-and-aft pieces were laid along the water-line, their ends entering the skids by means of mortices and tenons, where they were snugly bolted. The result of the entire arrangement was, to give the vessel an exterior protection against the field-ice, by means of a sort of network of timber, the whole of which had been so accurately fitted in the dock, as to bear equally on her frame. These preparations were not fairly completed before ten o'clock on the following morning, when Noah stood directly for an opening in the ice before us, which just about that time began to be apparent.

"We shan't go so fast for our armor," observed the cautious old sealer; "but what we want in heels, we'll make up in bottom."

For the whole of that day we worked our devious course, by great labor and at uncertain intervals, to the southward; and at night we fastened the *Walrus* to a floe, in waiting for the return of light. Just as the day dawned, however, I heard a tremendous grating sound against the side of the vessel; and rushing on deck, I found that we were completely caught between two immense fields, which seemed to be attracted toward each other for no other apparent purpose than to crush us. Here it was that the expedient of Captain Poke made manifest its merits. Protected by the massive timbers and false ribs, the bilge of the ship resisted the pressure; and as, under such circumstances, something must yield, luckily nothing but the attraction of gravitation was overcome. The skids, through their inclination, acted as wedges, the links pressing against the keel; and in the course of an hour the *Walrus* was gradually lifted out of the water, maintaining her upright position, in consequence of the powerful nip of the floes. No sooner was this experiment handsomely effected, than Mr. Poke jumped upon the ice, and commenced an examination of the ship's bottom.

"Here's a dry-dock for you, Sir John!"

exclaimed the old sealer, chuckling. "I'll have a patent for this, the moment I put foot ag'in in Stunnin'tun."

A feeling of security, to which I had been a stranger ever since we entered the ice, was created by the composure of Noah, and by his self-congratulation at what he called his project to get a look at the *Walrus's* bottom. Notwithstanding all the fine declarations of exultation and success, however, that he flourished among us who were not mariners, I was much disposed to think that, like other men of extraordinary genius, he had blundered on the grand result of his "ice-screws," and that it was not foreseen and calculated. Let this be as it may, however, all hands were soon on the floe, with brooms, scrapers, hammers, and nails, and the opportunity of repairing and cleaning was thoroughly improved.

For four-and-twenty hours the ship remained in the same attitude, stiff as a church, and some of us began to entertain apprehensions that she might be kept on her frozen blocks forever. The accident had happened, according to the statements of Captain Poke, in lat. 78° 13′ 26″—although I never knew in what manner he ascertained the important particular of our precise situation. Thinking it might be well to get some more accurate ideas on this subject after so long and ticklish a run, I procured the quadrant from Bob Ape, and brought it down upon the ice, where I made it a point, as an especial favor, the weather being favorable and the proper hour near, that our commander would correct his instinct by a solar observation. Noah protested that your old seaman, especially if a sealer and a Stunnin'tunner, had no occasion for such geometry operations, as he termed them; that it might be well enough, perhaps necessary, for your counting-house, silk-gloved captains, who run between New York and Liverpool, to be rubbing up their glasses and polishing their sextants, for they hardly ever knew where they were except at such times; but as for himself, he had little need of turning star-gazer at his time of life, and that as he had already told me, he was getting to be near-sighted, and had some doubts whether he could discern an object like the sun, that was known to be so many thousands of millions of miles from the earth. These scruples, however, were overcome by my cleaning the glasses, preparing a barrel for him to stand on, that he might be at the customary elevation above his horizon, and putting the instrument into his hands, the mates standing near, ready to make the calculations when he gave the sun's declination.

"We are drifting south'ard, I know," said Mr. Poke before he commenced his sight—"I feel it in my bones. We are, at this moment, in 79° 36′ 14″—having made a southerly drift of more than eighty miles since yesterday noon. Now mind my words, and see what the sun will say about it."

When the calculations were made, our latitude was found to be 79° 35′ 47″. Noah was somewhat puzzled by the difference, for which he could in no plausible way account, as the observation had been unusually good and certain. But an opinionated and ingenious man is seldom at a loss to find a sufficient reason to establish his own correctness, or to prove the mistakes of others.

"Ay, I see how it is," he said, after a little cogitation, "the sun must be wrong—it should be no wonder if the sun did get a little out of his track in these high, cold latitudes. Yes, yes; the sun must be wrong."

I was too much delighted at being certain we were going on our course to dispute the point, and the great luminary was abandoned to the imputation of sometimes being in error. Dr. Reasono took occasion to say, in my private ear, that there was a sect of philosophers in Leaphigh, who had long distrusted the accuracy of the planetary system, and who had even thrown out hints that the earth, in its annual revolution, moved in a direction absolutely contrary to that which nature had contemplated when she gave the original polar impulse; but that, as regarded himself, he thought very little of these opinions, as he had frequent occasion to observe that there was a large class of

monikins whose ideas always went up hill.

For two more days and as many nights, we continued to drift with the floes to the southward, as near as might be, toward the haven of our wishes. On the fourth morning, there was a suitable change in weather; both thermometer and barometer rose; the air became more bland, and most of our cats and dogs, notwithstanding we were still surrounded by the ice, began to cast their skins. Dr. Reasono noted these signs, and stepping on the floe, he brought back with him a considerable fragment of the frozen element. This was carried to the caboose, where it was subjected to the action of fire, which, within a given number of minutes, pretty much as a matter of course, as I thought, caused it to melt. The whole process was watched with an anxiety the most intense, by the whole of the monikins, however; and when the result was announced, the amiable and lovely Chatterissa clapped her pretty little *pattes* with joy, and gave all the other natural indications of delight, which characterize the emotions of that gentle sex of which she was so bright an ornament. Dr. Reasono was not backward in explaining the cause of so much unusual exhilaration, for hitherto her manner had been characterized by the well-bred and sophisticated restraint which marks high training. The experiment had shown by the infallible and scientific tests of monikin chemistry, that we were now within the influence of a steam-climate, and there could no longer be any rational doubt of our eventual arrival in the polar basin. The result proved that the philosopher was right. About noon the floes, which all that day had begun to assume what is termed a "sloppy character," suddenly gave way, and the *Walrus* settled down into her proper element, with great equanimity and propriety. Captain Poke lost no time in unshipping the skids; and a smacking breeze, that was well saturated with steam, springing up from the westward, we made sail. Our course was due south, without regard to the ice, which yielded before our bows like so much thick water, and just as the sun set, we entered the open sea, rioting in the luxuriance of its genial climate in triumph.

Sail was carried on the ship all that night; and just as the day dawned, we made the first mile-stone, a proof, not to be mistaken, that we were now actually within the monikin region. Dr. Reasono had the goodness to explain to us the history of these aquatic phenomena. It would seem that when the earth exploded, its entire crust, throughout the whole of this part of the world, was started upward in such a way as to give a very uniform depth to the sea, which in no place exceeds four fathoms. It follows, as a consequence, that no prevalence of northerly winds can force the icebergs beyond 78° of south latitude, as they invariably ground on reaching the outer edge of the polar bank. The floes, being thin, are melted of course; and thus, by this beneficent prevention, the monikin world is kept entirely free from the very danger to which a vulgar mind would be the most apt to believe it is the most exposed.

A congress of nations had been held, about five centuries since, which was called the Holy-philomarine-safety-and-find-the-way Alliance. At this congress the high contracting parties agreed to name a commission to make provision, generally, for the secure navigation of the seas. One of the expedients of this commission, which, by the way, is said to have been composed of very illustrious monikins, was to cause massive blocks of stone to be laid down, at measured distances, throughout the whole of the basin, and in which other stone uprights were secured. The necessary inscriptions were graved on proper tablets, and as we approached the one already named, I observed that it had the image of a monikin, carved also in stone, with his tail extended in a right line, pointing, as Mr. Poke assured me, S. and by W. half W. I had made sufficient progress in the monikin language to read, as we glided past this water mark—"To Leaphigh, fifteen miles." One monikin mile, however, we were next told, was equal to nine English statute miles; and consequently,

we were not so near our port as was at first supposed. I expressed great satisfaction at finding ourselves so fairly on the road, however, and paid Dr. Reasono some well-merited compliments on the high state of civilization to which his species had evidently arrived. The day was not distant, I added, when it was reasonable to suppose our own seas would have floating *restaurants* and *cafés*, with suitable pot-houses for the mariners; though I did not well see how we were to provide a substitute for their own excellent organization of mile-stones.

The doctor received my compliments with becoming modesty, saying that he had no doubt mankind would do all that lay in their power to have good eating and drinking houses, wherever they could be established; but as to the marine milestones, he agreed with me, that there was little hope of their being planted, until the crust of the earth should be driven upward, so as to rise within four fathoms of the surface of the water. On the other hand, Captain Poke held this latter improvement very cheap. He affirmed it was no sign of civilization at all, for, as a man became civilized, he had less need of primers and finger-boards, and as for Leaphigh, any tolerable navigator could see it bore S. by W. half W. allowing for variation, distant 135 English miles. To these objections I was silent, for I had frequent occasion to observe that men very often underrate any advantage of which they have come into the enjoyment by providential interposition.

Just as the sun was in the meridian, the cry of "land ahead" was heard from aloft. The monikins were all smiles and gratitude; the crew were excited by admiration and wonder; and as for myself, I was literally ready to jump out of my skin, not only with delight, but in some measure also, from the exceeding warmth of the atmosphere. Our cats and dogs began to uncase; Bob was obliged to unmask his most exposed frontier, by removing the union-jack; and Noah himself fairly appeared on deck in his shirt and night-cap. The amiable strangers were too much occupied to be particular, and I slipped into my stateroom to change my toilet to a dress of thin silk, that was painted to resemble the skin of a polar bear—a contradiction between things that is much too common in our species ever to be deemed out of fashion.

We neared the land with great rapidity, impelled by a steam-breeze, and just as the sun sunk in the horizon our anchor was let go in the outer harbor of the city of Aggregation.

CHAPTER XV.

AN ARRIVAL—FORMS OF RECEPTION—SEVERAL NEW CHRISTENINGS—AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT, AND TERRA FIRMA.

It is always agreeable to arrive safe, at the end of a long, fatiguing, and hazardous journey. But the pleasure is considerably augmented when the visit is paid to a novel region, with a steam-climate, and which is peopled by a new species. My own satisfaction, too, was coupled with the reflection that I had been of real service to four very interesting and well-bred strangers, who had been cast, by an adverse fortune, into the hands of humanity, and who owed to me a boon far more precious than life itself—a restoration to their natural and acquired rights, their proper stations in society, and sacred liberty! The reader will judge, therefore, with what inward self-congratulation I now received the acknowledgments of the whole monikin party, and listened to their most solemn protestations ever to consider, not only all they might jointly and severally possess in the way of estates and dignities, at my entire disposal, but their persons as my slaves. Of course, I made as light as possible of any little service I might have done them, protesting in my turn that I looked upon the whole affair more in the light of a party of pleasure than a tax, reminding them that I had not only obtained an insight into a new philosophy, but that I was already, thanks to the decimal system, a tolerable proficient in their ancient and learned language. These civilities were scarcely well over, before we were boarded by the boat of the port-captain.

The arrival of a human ship was an event likely to create excitement in a monikin country; and as our approach had been witnessed for several hours, preparations had been made to give us a proper reception. The section of the academy to whom is committed the custody of the "Science of Indications," was hastily assembled by order of the king, who, by the way, never speaks except through the mouth of his oldest male first cousin, who by the fundamental laws of the realm is held responsible for all his official acts (in private, the king is allowed almost as many privileges as any other monikin), and who, as is due to him in simple justice, is permitted to exercise, in a public point of view, the functions of the eyes, ears, nose, conscience, and tail of the monarch. The *savans* were active, and as they proceeded with method, and on well-established principles, their report was quickly made. It contained, as we afterward understood, seven sheets of premises, eleven of argument, sixteen of conjecture, and two lines of deduction. This heavy draft on the monikin intellect was duly achieved by dividing the work into as many parts as there were members of the section present, viz., forty. The substance of their labors was, to say that the vessel in sight was a strange vessel; that it came to a strange country, on a strange errand, being manned by strangers; and that its objects were more likely to be peaceful than warlike, since the glasses of the academy did not enable them to discover any means of annoyance, with the exception of certain wild beasts, who appeared, however, to be peaceably occupied in working the ship. All this was sententiously expressed in the purest monikin language. The effect of the report was to cause all hostile preparations to be abandoned.

No sooner did the boat of the port-captain return to the shore, with the news that the strange ship had arrived with my Lord Chatterino, my Lady Chatterissa and Dr. Reasono, than there was a general burst of joy along the strand. In a very short time, the king—alias his eldest first cousin of the male gender—ordered the usual compliments to be paid to his distinguished subjects. A deputation of young lords, the hopes of Leaphigh, came off to receive their colleague; whilst a bevy of beautiful maidens, of noble birth, crowded around the smiling and graceful Chatterissa, gladdening her heart with their caressing manners and felicitations. The noble pair left us in separate boats, each attended by an appropriate escort. We overlooked the little neglect of forgetting to take leave of us, for joy had quite set them both beside themselves. Next came a long procession composed of high numbers, all of the "brown-study color." These learned and dignified persons were a deputation from the academy, which had sent forth no less than forty of its number to receive Dr. Reasono. The meeting between these loving friends of monikinity and of knowledge was conducted on the most approved principles of reason. Each section (there are forty in the Academy of Leaphigh) made an address, to all of which the doctor returned suitable replies, always using exactly the same sentiments, but varying the subject by transpositions, as dictionaries are known to be composed by the ingenious combinations of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet.

Dr. Reasono withdrew with his coadjutors, to my surprise paying not a whit more attention to Captain Poke and myself than would be paid in any highly civilized country of Christendom, on a similar occasion, by a collection of the learned, to the accidental presence of two monkeys. I thought this augured badly, and began to feel as became Sir John Goldencalf, Bart., of Householder Hall, in the kingdom of Great Britain, when my sensations were nipped in the bud by the arrival of the officers of registration and circulation. It was the duty of the latter to give us the proper passports to enter into and to circulate within the country, after the former had properly enregistered our numbers and colors, in such a way as to bring us within the reach of taxation. The officer of registration was very expeditious from long practice. He decided at once, that I formed a new class by my-

self, of which, of course, I was No. 1. The captain and his two mates formed another, Nos. 1, 2 and 3. Bob had a class also to himself, and the honors of No. 1; and the crew formed a fresh class, being numbered according to height, as the register deemed their merits to be altogether physical. Next came the important point of color, on which depended the quality of the class or *caste*, the numbers merely indicating our respective stations in the particular divisions. After a good deal of deliberation, and many interrogatories, I was enregistered as No. 1, flesh-color; Noah as No. 1, sea-water color, and his mates 2 and 3, accordingly; Bob as No. 1, smut-color, and the crew as Nos. 1, 2, 3, etc., tar-color. The officer now called upon an assistant to come forth with a sort of knitting-needle heated red-hot, in order to affix the official stamp to each in succession. Luckily for us all, Noah happened to be the first to whom the agent of the stamp office applied to uncase and to prepare for the operation.

The result was one of those bursts of eloquent and logical vituperation, and of remonstrating outcries, to which any new personal exaction never failed to give birth in the sealer. His discourse on this occasion might be divided into the several following heads, all of which were very ingeniously embellished by the usual expletives and imagery: "He was not a beast to be branded like a horse, nor a slave to be treated like a Congo nigger; he saw no use in applying the marks to men, who were sufficiently distinguished from monkeys already; Sir John had a handle before his name, and if he liked it, he might carry his name behind his body, by way of counterpoise, but, for his part, he wanted no outriggers of the sort, being satisfied with plain Noah Poke; he was a republican, and it was anti-republican for a man to carry about with him graven images; he thought it might be even flying in the face of the Scriptures, or what was worse, turning his back on them; he said that the *Walrus* had her name, in good eligible characters on her starn, and that might answer for both of them; he protested, d——n his eyes, that he wouldn't be branded like a thief; he incontinently wished the keeper of the privy seal to the d——l; he insisted there was no use in the practice, unless one threw all aback, and went starn foremost into society, a rudeness at which human natur' revolted; he knew a man in Stunnin'tun who had five names, and he should like to know what they would do with him, if this practice should come into fashion there; he had no objection to a little paint, but no red-hot knitting-needle should make acquaintance with his flesh, so long as he walked his quarter-deck."

The keeper of the seals listened to this remonstrance with singular patience and decorum; a forbearance that was probably owing to his not understanding a word that had been said. But there is a language that is universal, and it is not less easy to comprehend when a man is in a passion than it is to comprehend any other irritated animal. The officer of the registration department, on this hint, politely inquired of me if some part of his official duties were not particularly disagreeable to No. 1, sea-water color. On my admitting that the captain was reluctant to be branded, he merely shrugged his shoulders, and observed that the exactions of the public were seldom agreeable, but that duty was duty, that the stamp act was peremptory, and not a foot of ours could touch Leaphigh until we were all checked off in this manner, in exact conformity with the registration. I was much puzzled what to do by this indomitable purpose to perform his duty in the officer; for, to own the truth, my own cuticle had quite as much aversion to the operation as that of Captain Poke himself. It was not the principle so much as novelty of its application which distressed me; for I had traveled too much not to know that a stranger rarely enters a *civilized* country without being more or less skinned, the merest savages only permitting him to pass unscathed. It suddenly came to my recollection that the monikins had left all the remains of their particular stores on board, consisting of an ample supply of delicious nuts. Sending for a bag of the best of them, I ordered it

to be put into the register's boat, informing him at the same time, that I was conscious they were quite unworthy of him, but that I hoped, such as they were, he would allow me to make an offering of them to his wife. This attention was properly felt and received; and a few minutes afterward a certificate, in the following words, was put into my hands, viz.:

"Leaphigh, season of promise, day of performance: *Whereas*, certain persons of the human species have lately presented themselves to be enregistered, according to the statute 'for promotion of order and classification, and for the collection of contributions;' and *whereas*, these persons are yet in the second class of the animal probation, and are more subject to bodily impressions than the higher, or monikin species: Now, know all monikins, etc., that they are *stamped* in paint, and that only by their numbers: each class among them being easily to be distinguished from the others by outward and indelible proofs.

"Signed,

"No. 8,020 office-color."

I was told that all we had to do now was to mark ourselves with paint or tar, as we might choose, the latter being recommended for the crew; taking no further trouble than to number ourselves; and when we went ashore, if any of the gens-d'armes inquired why we had not the legal impression on our persons, which quite possibly would be the case, as the law was absolute in its requisitions, all we had to do was to show the certificate; but if the certificate was not sufficient, we were men of the world, and understood the nature of things so well, that we did not need to be taught so simple a proposition in philosophy as that which says, "like causes produce like effects;" and he presumed I could not have so far overrated his merits as to have sent the whole of my nuts into his boat. I avow that I was not very sorry to hear the officer throw out these hints, for they convinced me that my journey through Leaphigh would be accompanied with less embarrassment than I had anticipated, since I now plainly perceived that monikins act on principles that are not very essentially different from those of the human race in general.

The complaisant register and the keeper of the privy seal took their departure together; then we forthwith proceeded to number ourselves in compliance with his advice. As the principle was already settled, we had no difficulty with its application, Noah, Bob, myself, and the largest of the seamen being all Nos. 1, and the rest ranking in order. By this time it was night. The guard-boats began to appear on the water, and we deferred disembarking until morning.

All hands were early afoot. It had been arranged that Captain Poke and myself, attended by Bob, as a domestic, were to land, in order to make a journey through the island, while the *Walrus* was to be left in charge of the mates and the crew; the latter having permission to go ashore from time to time, as is the practice with all seamen in port. There was a great deal of preliminary scrubbing and shaving before the whole party could appear on deck properly attired for the occasion. Mr. Poke wore a thin dress of linen, admirably designed to make him look like a sea-lion; a conceit that he said was not only agreeable to his feelings and habits, but which had a cool and pleasant character that was altogether suited to a steam-climate. For my own part, I agreed with the worthy sealer, seeing but little difference between his going in this garb and his going quite naked. My dress was made, on a design of my own, after the social-stake system; or, in other words, it was so arranged as to take an interest in half of the animals of Exeter 'Change, to which *menagerie* the artist by whom it had been painted was sent expressly, in order to consult nature. Bob wore the effigy, as his master called it, of a turnspit.

The monikins were by far too polished to crowd about us when we landed, with an impertinent and troublesome curiosity. So far from this, we were permitted to

approach the capital itself without let or hindrance. As it is less my intention to describe physical things than to dwell upon the philosophy and the other moral aspects of the Leaphigh world, little more will be said of their houses, domestic economy, and other improvements in the arts, than may be gathered accidentally as the narrative shall proceed. Let it suffice to say on these heads, that the Leaphigh monikins, like men, consult, or think they consult—which, so long as they know no better, amounts to pretty much the same thing—their own convenience in all things, the pocket alone excepted; and that they continue very laudably to do as their fathers did before them, seldom making changes, unless they may happen to possess there commendation of being exotics; when, indeed, they are sometimes adopted, probably on account of their possessing the merit of having been proved suitable to another state of things.

Among the first persons we met on entering the great square of Aggregation, as the capital of Leaphigh is called when rendered into English, was my Lord Chatterino. He was gayly promenading with a company of young nobles, who all seemed to be enjoying their youth, health, rank, and privileges with infinite gusto. We met this party in a way to render an escape from mutual recognition impossible. At first I thought, from his averted eye, that it was the intention of our late shipmate to consider our knowledge of each other as one of those accidental acquaintances which, it is known, we all form at watering-places, on journeys, or in the country, and which it is ill-mannered to press upon others in town; or, as Captain Poke afterward expressed it, like the intimacy between an Englishman and a Yankee, that has been formed in the house of the latter, on better wine than is met with anywhere else, and which was never yet known to withstand the influence of a British fog. "Why, Sir John," the sealer added, "I once tuck (he meant to say took, not *tucked*) a countryman of yours under my wing, at Stunnin'tun, during the last war. He was a prisoner, as we make prisoners; that is, he went and did pretty much as he pleased; and the fellow had the best of everything—molasses that a spoon would stand upright in, pork that would do to slush down a topmast, and New England rum that a king might set down to, but could not get up from—well, what was the end on't? Why, as sure as we are among these monkeys, the fellow *booked* me. Had I *booked* but the half of what he guzzled, the amount, I do believe, would have taken the transaction out of any justice's court in the State. He said my molasses was meager, the pork lean, and the liquor infernal. There were truth and gratitude for you! He gave the whul account, too, as a specimen of what he called American living!"

Hereupon I reminded my companion that an Englishman did not like to receive even favors on compulsion; that when he meets a stranger in his own country, and is master of his own actions, no man understands better what true hospitality is, as I hoped one day to show him at Householder Hall; as to his first remark, he ought to remember that an Englishman considers America as no more than the country, and that it would be ill-mannered to press an acquaintance made there.

Noah, like most other men, was very reasonable on all subjects that did not interfere with his prejudices or his opinions; and he very readily admitted the general justice of my reply.

"It's pretty much as you say, Sir John," he continued; "in England you may press men, but it won't do to press hospitality. Get a volunteer in this way, and he is as good a fellow as heart can wish. I shouldn't have cared so much about the chap's book, if he had said nothin' ag'in the rum. Why, Sir John, when the English bombarded Stunnin'tun with eighteen-pounders, I proposed to load our old twelve with a gallon out of the very same cask, for I do think it would have huv' the shot the best part of a mile!"

But this digression is leading me from the narrative. My Lord Chatterino turned his head a little on one side as we were passing; and I was deliberating whether, under the circumstances, it would be well-bred to remind him of our old acquaint-

ance, when the question was settled by the decision of Captain Poke, who placed himself in such a position that it was no easy matter to get around him, through him, or over him: or who laid himself what he called "athwart hawse."

"Good morning, my lord," said the straightforward seaman, who generally went at a subject as he went at a seal. "A fine warm day; and the smell of the land, after so long a passage, is quite agreeable to the nose, whatever its ups and downs may be to the legs."

The companions of the young peer looked amazed; and some of them, I thought, notwithstanding gravity and earnestness are rather characteristic of the monikin physiognomy, betrayed a slight disposition to laugh. Not so with my Lord Chatterino himself.

He examined us a moment through a glass, and then seemed suddenly, and on the whole, agreeably struck at seeing us.

"How, Goldencalf!" he cried, in surprise, "you in Leaphigh! This is, indeed, an unexpected satisfaction; for it will now be in my power to prove some of the facts that I am telling my friends by actual observation. Here are two of the humans, gents, of which I was but this moment giving you some account—"

Observing a disposition to merriment in his associates, he continued, looking exceedingly grave:

"Restrain yourselves, gentlemen, I pray you. These are very worthy people, I do assure you, in their own way, and are not at all to be ridiculed. I scarcely know even in our own marine a better or a bolder navigator than this honest seaman; and as for the one in the party-colored skin, I will take upon myself to say, that he is really a person of some consideration in his own little circle. He is, I believe, a member of par—par—par—am I right, Sir John—a member of—"

"Parliament, my lord—an M. P."

"Ay—I thought I had it—an M. P., or a member of Parliament, in his own country, which, I daresay, now, is some such thing among his people as a public proclaimer of those laws which come from his majesty's eldest first-cousin of the masculine gender may be among us. Some such thing—eh—now—eh—is it not, Sir John?"

"I daresay it is, my lord."

"All very true, Chatterino," put in one of the young monikins, with a very long, elaborated tail, which he carried nearly perpendicular, "but what would be even a law-*maker*—to say nothing of law-*breakers* like ourselves—among men? You should remember, my dear fellow, that a mere title, or a profession, is not the criterion of true greatness; but that the prodigy of a village may be a very common monikin in town."

"Poh—poh," interrupted Lord Chatterino, "thou art ever for refining, Hightail—Sir John Goldencalf is a very respectable person in the island of—a—a—a—what do you call that said island of yours, Goldencalf—a—a—"

"Great Britain, my lord."

"Ay, Great Breeches, sure enough; yes, he is a respectable person—I can take it upon myself to say, with confidence, a very respectable person in Great Breeches. I daresay he owns no small portion of the island himself. How much, now, Sir John, if the truth were told?"

"Only the estate and village of Householder, my lord, with a few scattered manors here and there."

"Well, that is a very pretty thing, there can be no doubt—then you have money at use?"

"And who is the debtor?" sneeringly inquired the jackanapes Hightail.

"No other, my Lord Hightail, than the realm of Great Britain."

"Exquisite, that, egad! A noble's fortune in the custody of the realm of a—Greek—a—"

"Great Breeches," interrupted my Lord Chatterino; who, notwithstanding he swore he was excessively angry with his friend for his obstinate incredulity, very evidently had to exercise some forebearance to keep from joining in the general laugh. "It is a very respectable country, I do protest; and I scarcely remember to have tasted better gooseberries than they grow in that very island."

"What! have they really gardens, Chatterino?"

"Certainly — after a fashion — and houses, and public conveyances—and even universities."

"You do not mean to say, certainly, that they have a system?"

"Why, as to system, I believe they are a little at sixes and sevens. I really can't take it upon myself to say that they have a system."

"Oh, yes, my lord—of a certainty we have one—the social-stake system."

"Ask the creature," whispered audibly the filthy coxcomb Hightail, "if he himself, now, has any income."

"How is it, Sir John—have you an income?"

"Yes, my lord, of one hundred and twelve thousand sovereigns a year."

"Of what? of what?" demanded two or three voices, with well-bred, subdued eagerness.

"Of sovereigns — why, that means kings!"

It would appear that the Leaphighers, while they obey only the king's eldest first-cousin of the masculine gender, perform all their official acts in the name of the sovereign himself, for whose person and character they pretty uniformly express the profoundest veneration; just as we men express admiration for a virtue that we never practice. My declaration, therefore, produced a strong sensation, and I was soon required to explain myself. This I did by simply stating the truth.

"Oh, gold, yclept sovereigns!" exclaimed three or four, laughing heartily. "Why, then, your famous Great Breeches people, after all, Chatterino, are so little advanced in civilization as to use gold! Harkee, Signor—a—a—Boldercraft, have you no currency in 'promises'?"

"I do not know, sir, that I rightly comprehend the question."

"Why, we poor barbarians, sir, who live as you see us, only in a state of simplicity and nature," there was irony in every syllable the impudent scoundrel uttered, "we poor wretches, or rather our ancestors, made the discovery, that for the purposes of convenience, having, as you perceive, no pockets, it might be well to convert all our currency into 'promises.' Now, I would ask if you have any of that coin?"

"Not as coin, sir, but as collateral to coin we have plenty."

"He speaks of collaterals in currency, as if he were discussing a pedigree! Are you really, Mynherr Shouldercalf, so little advanced in your country as not to know the immense advantages of a currency of 'promises'?"

"As I do not understand exactly what the nature of this currency is, sir, I cannot answer as readily as I could wish."

"Let us explain it to him; for, I vow, I am really curious to hear his answer. Chatterino, do you, who have some knowledge of the thing's habits, be our interpreter."

"The matter is thus, Sir John. About five hundred years ago, our ancestors having reached that pass in civilization when they came to dispense with the use of pockets, began to find it necessary to substitute a new currency for that of the metals, which it was inconvenient to carry, of which they might be robbed, and which also were liable to be counterfeited. The first expedient was to try a lighter substitute. Laws were passed giving value to linen and cotton, in the raw material; then compound and manufactured; next, written on, and reduced in bulk until, having passed through the several gradations of wrapping-paper, brown paper, foolscap and blotting-paper, and having set the plan fairly at work, and got confidence thoroughly established, the system was perfected by a *coup de main*; 'promises' in words were substituted for all other coin. You see the advantage at a glance. A monikin can travel without pockets or baggage, and still carry a million; the money cannot be counterfeited, nor can it be stolen or burned."

"But, my lord, does it not depreciate the value of property?"

"Just the contrary; an acre that formerly could be bought for one promise would now bring a thousand."

"This, certainly, is a great improvement, unless frequent failures—"

"Not at all; there has not been a bankruptcy in Leaphigh since the law was passed making promises a legal tender."

"I wonder no chancellor of the exchequer ever thought of this at home!"

"So much for your Great Breeches, Chatterino!" And there was another and a very general laugh. I never before felt so deep a sense of national humility.

"As they have universities," cried another coxcomb, "perhaps this person has attended one of them."

"Indeed, sir," I answered, "I am regularly graduated."

"It is not easy to see what he has done with his knowledge—for, though my sight is none of the worst, I cannot trace the smallest sign of a *cauda* about him."

"Ah!" Lord Chatterino good-naturedly exclaimed, "the inhabitants of Great Breeches carry their brains in their heads."

"Their heads!"

"Heads!"

"That's excellent, by his majesty's prerogative! Here's civilization with a vengeance!"

I now thought that the general ridicule would overwhelm me. Two or three came closer, as if in pity or curiosity; and, at last, one cried out that I actually wore clothes.

"Clothes—the wretch! Chatterino, do all your human friends wear clothes?"

The young peer was obliged to confess the truth; and then there arose such a clamor as may be fancied took place among the peacocks when they discovered the daw among them in masquerade. Human nature could endure no more; and, bowing to the company, I wished Lord Chatterino, very hurriedly, good morning, and proceeded toward the tavern.

"Don't forget to step into Chatterino House, Goldencalf, before you sail," cried my late fellow-traveler, looking over his shoulder, and nodding in quite a friendly way toward me.

"King!" exclaimed Captain Poke. "That blackguard ate a whole bread-lockerful of nuts on our outward passage, and now he tells us to step into his Chatterino House before we sail!"

I endeavored to pacify the sealer by an appeal to his philosophy. It was true that men never forget obligations, and were always excessively anxious to repay them; but the monikins were an exceedingly instructed species; they thought more of their minds than of their bodies, as was plain by comparing the smallness of the latter with the length and development of the seat of reason; and one of his experience should know that good-breeding is decidedly an arbitrary quality, and that we ought to respect its laws, however opposed to our own previous practices.

"I daresay, friend Noah, you may have observed some material difference in the usages of Paris, for instance, and those of Stunnin'tun."

"That I have, Sir John, that I have; and altogether to the advantage of Stunnin'tun be they."

"We are all addicted to the weakness of believing our own customs best; and it requires that we should travel much before we are able to decide on points so nice."

"And do you not call me a traveler! Haven't I been sixteen times a-sealing, twice a-whaling, without counting my cruise overland, and this last run to Leaphigh!"

"Ay, you have gone over much land and much water, Mr. Poke; but your stay in any given place has been just long enough to find fault. Usages must be worn, like a shoe, before one can judge of the fit."

It is possible Noah would have retorted, had not Mrs. Vigilance Lynx, at that moment, come wriggling by in a way to show she was much satisfied with her safe return home. To own the truth, while striving to find apologies for it, I had been a little *contrarié*, as the French term it, by the indifference of my Lord Chatterino, which in my secret heart I was not slow in attributing to the manner in which a peer of the realm of Leaphigh regarded, *de haut en bas*, a mere baronet of Great Britain—or Great Breeches, as the young noble so pertinaciously insisted on term-

ing our illustrious island. Now, as Mrs. Vigilance was of "russet-color," a caste of an inferior standing, I had little doubt that she would be as glad to own an intimacy with Sir John Goldencalf, of Householder Hall, as the other might be willing to shuffle it off.

"Good morrow, good Mrs. Vigilance," I said familiarly, endeavoring to wriggle in a way that *would* have shaken a tail, had it been my good fortune to be the owner of one—"Good morrow, good Mrs. Vigilance—I'm glad to meet you again on shore."

I do not remember that Mrs. Vigilance, during the whole period of our acquaintance, was particularly squeamish, or topping in her deportment. On the contrary, she had rather made herself remarkable for a modest and commendable reserve. But on the present occasion, she disappointed all reasonable expectation by shrinking on one side, uttering a slight scream, and hurrying past as if she thought we might bite her. Indeed, I can only compare her deportment to that of a female of our own, who is so full of vanity as to fancy all eyes on her, and who gives herself airs about a dog or a spider, because she thinks they make her look so much the more interesting. Conversation was quite out of the question; for the duenna hurried on, bending her head downward, as if heartily ashamed of an involuntary weakness.

"Well, good madam," said Noah, whose stern eye followed her movements until she was quite lost in the crowd, "you would have had a sleepless v'yage, if I had fore-imagined this! Sir John, these people stare at us as if we were wild beasts!"

"I cannot say I am of your way of thinking, Captain Poke. To me they seem to take no more notice of us, than we should take of two curs in the streets of London."

"I begin now to understand what the parsons mean when they talk of the lost condition of man. It's ra'ally awful to witness to what a state of unfeelingness a people can be abandoned! Bob, get out of the way, you grinning blackguard."

Hereupon Bob received a salutation which would have demolished his stern frame, had it not been for the union-jack. Just then I was glad to see Dr. Reasono advancing toward us, surrounded by a group of attentive listeners, all of whom, by their years, gravity and deportment, I made no question were *savans*. As he drew near, I found he was discoursing of the marvels of his late voyage. When within six feet of us the whole party stopped, the doctor continuing to descant with a very proper gesticulation, and in a way to show that his subject was of infinite interest to his listeners. Accidentally turning his eye in our direction, he caught a glimpse of our figures, and making a few hurried apologies to those around him, the excellent philosopher came eagerly forward, with both hands extended. Here was a difference, indeed, between his treatment and that of Lord Chatterino and the duenna! The salutation was warmly returned; and the doctor and myself stepped a little apart, as he lost no time in informing me he wished to say a word in private.

"My dear Sir John," the philosopher began, "our arrival has been the most happily timed thing imaginable! All Leaphigh, by this time, is filled with the subject; and you can scarcely conceive the importance that is attached to the event. New sources of trade, scientific discoveries, phenomena both moral and physical, and results that it is thought may serve to raise the monikin civilization still higher than ever. Fortunately, the academy holds its most solemn meeting of the year this very day, and I have been formally requested to give the assembly an outline of those events which have lately passed before my eyes. The king's eldest first cousin of the masculine gender is to attend openly; and it is even conjectured, in a way to be quite authentic, that the king himself will be present in his own royal person."

"How!" I exclaimed, "have you a mode, in Leaphigh, of rendering conjectures certain?"

"Beyond a doubt, sir, or what would our civilization be worth? As to the

king's majesty, we always deal in the most direct ambiguities. Now as respects many of our ceremonies, the sovereign is known morally to be present, when he may be actually and physically eating his dinner at the other extremity of the island; this important illustration of the royal ubiquity is effected by means of a legal fiction. On the other hand, the king often indulges his natural propensities, such as curiosity, love of fun, or detestation of ennui, by coming in person, when, by the court fiction, he is thought to be seated on his throne, in his own royal palace. Oh! as to all these little accommodations and graces in the art of truths, we are behind no people in the universe!"

"I beg pardon, doctor—so his majesty is expected to be at the academy this morning?"

"In a private box. Now this affair is of the last importance to me as a *savant*, to you as a human being—for it will have a tendency to raise your whole species in the monikin estimation—and, lastly, to learning. It will be indispensably necessary that you should attend, with as many of your companions as possible—more especially the better specimens. I was coming down to the landing in the hope of meeting you; and a messenger has gone off to the ship to require that the people be sent ashore forthwith. You will have a tribune to yourselves; and, really, I do not like to express beforehand what I think concerning the degree of attention you will all receive; but this much I think I can say—you will see."

"This proposition, doctor, has taken me a little by surprise, and I hardly know what answer to give."

"You cannot say no, Sir John; for should his majesty hear that you have refused to come to a meeting at which he is to be present, it would seriously, and, I might add, justly offend him; nor could I answer for the consequences."

"Why, I was told that all the power was in the hands of his majesty's eldest first cousin of the masculine gender; in which case I thought I might snap my fingers at his majesty himself."

"Not in opinion, Sir John, which is one of the three estates of the government. Ours is a government of three estates—viz., the Law, Opinion, and Practice. By law the king rules, by practice his cousin rules, and by opinion the king again rules. Thus is the strong point of practice balanced by law and opinion. This it is that constitutes the harmony and perfection of the system. No, it would never do to offend his majesty."

Although I did not very well comprehend the doctor's argument, yet, as I had often found in human society, theories political, moral, theological, and philosophical, that everybody had faith in, and which nobody understood, I thought discussion useless, and gave up the point by promising the doctor to be at the academy in half an hour, which was the time named for our appearance. Taking the necessary directions to find the place, we separated; he to hasten to make his preparations, and I to reach the tavern, in order to deposit our baggage, that no decency might be overlooked on an occasion so solemn.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN INN—DEBTS PAID IN ADVANCE, AND A SINGULAR TOUCH OF HUMAN NATURE FOUND CLOSELY INCORPORATED WITH MONIKIN NATURE.

We soon secured rooms, ordered dinner, brushed our clothes, and made the other little arrangements that it was necessary to observe for the credit of the species. Everything being ready, we left the inn, and hurried toward the "*Palais des Arts et des Sciences.*" We had not got out of the inn, however, before one of its *garçons* was at our heels with a message from his mistress. He told us, in very respectful tones, that his master was out, and that he had taken with him the key of the strong-box; that there was not actually money enough in the drawer to furnish an entertainment for such great persons as ourselves, and she had taken the liberty to send us a bill receipted, with a request that we would make a small advance, rather than reduce her to the mortifica-

tion of treating such distinguished guests in an unworthy manner. The bill read as follows :

No. 1 party-color and friends,
To No. 82,763, grape-color, Dr.
To use of apartments, with meals and lights, as per agreement, *p. p.* 300 per diem—one day, *p. p.* 300
By cash advanced, 50
Balance due, *p. p.* 250

"This seems all right," I observed to Noah; "but I am, at this moment, as penniless as the good woman herself. I really do not see what we are to do, unless Bob sends her back his store of nuts—"

"Harkee, my nimble-go-hop," put in the seaman, "what is your pleasure?"

The waiter referred to the bill, as expressing his mistress's wants.

"What are these p. p. that I find noted in the bill—play or pay, hey?"

"Promises, of course, your honor."

"Oh! then you desire fifty promises, to provide our dinner."

"Nothing more, sir. With that sum you shall dine like noblemen—ay, sir, like aldermen."

I was delighted to find that this class of worthy beings have the same propensities in all countries.

"Here, take a hundred," answered Noah, snapping his finger, "and make no bones of it. And harkee, my worthy—lay out every farthing of them in the fare. Let there be good cheer, and no one will grumble at the bill. I am ready to buy the inn, and all it holds, at need."

The waiter departed, well satisfied with these assurances, and apparently in the anticipation of good vails for his own trouble.

We soon got into the current that was setting toward our place of destination. On reaching the gate, we found that we were anxiously expected; for there was an attendant in waiting, who instantly conducted us to the seats that were provided for our special reception. It is always agreeable to be among the privileged, and I must own that we were all not a little flattered, on finding that an elevated tribune had been prepared for us, in the center of the rotunda in which the academy held its sittings, so that we could see, and be seen by, every individual of the crowded assembly. The whole crew, even to the negro cook, had preceded us; an additional compliment, that I did not fail to acknowledge by suitable salutations to all the members present. After the first feelings of pleasure and surprise were a little abated, I had leisure to look about me and to survey the company.

The academicians occupied the whole of the body of the rotunda, the space taken up by the erection of our temporary tribune alone excepted; while there were sofas, chairs, tribunes and benches arranged for the spectators, in the outer circles, and along the side-walls of the hall. As the edifice itself was very large, and mind had so essentially reduced matter in the monikin species, there could not have been less than fifty thousand tails present. Just before the ceremonies commenced, Dr. Reasono approached our tribune, passing from one to another of the party, saying a pleasant and encouraging word to each, in a way to create high expectations in us all, as to what was to follow. We were so very evidently honored and distinguished, that I struggled hard to subdue any unworthy feeling of pride, as unbecoming human meekness, and in order to maintain a philosophical equanimity under the manifestations of respect and gratitude that I knew were about to be lavished upon even the meanest of our party. The doctor was yet in the midst of his pointed attentions, when the king's eldest first cousin of the masculine gender entered, and the business of the meeting immediately began. I profited by a short pause, however, to say a few words to my companions. I told them that there would soon be a serious demand on their modesty. We had performed a great and generous exploit, and it did not become us to lessen its merit by betraying a vainglorious self-esteem. I implored them all to take pattern by me; promising, in the end, that their new friends would trebly prize their hardihood, self-denial and skill.

There was a new member of the academy of Latent Sympathies to be received and installed. A long discourse was read by one of this department of the monikin learning, which pointed out and enlarged on the rare merits of the new academician. He was followed by the latter; who in a very elaborate production, that consumed just fifty-five minutes in the reading, tried all he could to persuade the audience that the defunct was a loss to the world that no accident or application would ever repair; and that he himself was precisely the worst person who could have been selected to be his successor. I was a little surprised at the perfect coolness with which the learned body listened to a reproach, that was so very distinctly and perseveringly thrown, as it were, into their very teeth. But a more intimate acquaintance with monikin society satisfied me, that any one might say just what he pleased, so long as he allowed that every one else was an excellent fellow, and he himself the poorest devil going. When the new member had triumphantly established his position, and just as I thought the colleagues were bound, in common honesty, to reconsider their vote, he concluded, and took his seat among them with quite as much assurance as the best philosopher of them all.

After a short pause, and an abundance of felicitations on his excellent and self-abasing discourse, the newly admitted member again rose, and began to read an essay on some discoveries he had made in the science of Latent Sympathies. According to his account of the matter, every monikin possessed a fluid which was invisible, like the animalcula which pervade nature, and which required only to be brought into command, and to be reduced into more rigid laws, to become the substitute for the senses of sight, touch, taste, hearing and smelling. This fluid was communicable; and had already been so far rendered subject to the will, as to make it of service in seeing in the dark, in smelling when the operator had a bad cold, in tasting when the palate was down, and in touching by proxy. Ideas had been transmitted, through its agency, sixty-two leagues in one minute and a half. Two monikins, who were afflicted with diseased tails, had, during the last two years, been insulated and saturated, and had then lost those embellishments, by operations; a quantity of the fluid having been substituted in their places so happily, that the patients fancied themselves more than ever conspicuous for the length and *finesse* of their *caudæ*. An experiment had also been successfully tried on a member of the lower House of Parliament, who, being married to a monikina of unusual mind, had for a long time been supplied with ideas from this source, although his partner was compelled to remain at home, in order to superintend the management of their estate, forty-two miles from town, during the whole session. He particularly recommended to government the promotion of this science, as it might be useful in obtaining evidence for the purposes of justice, in detecting conspiracies, in collecting the taxes, and selecting candidates for trusts of a responsible nature. The suggestion was well received by the king's cousin, more especially those parts that alluded to sedition and the revenue.

This essay was also perfectly well received by the *savans*, for I afterward found very little came amiss to the academy; and the members named a committee forthwith, to examine into "the facts concerning invisible and unknown fluids, their agency, importance, and relations to monikin happiness."

We were next favored with a discussion on the different significations of the word *gorstchwzyb;* which rendered into English, means "eh!" The celebrated philologist who treated the subject, discovered amazing ingenuity in expatiating on its ramifications and deductions. First he tried the letters by transpositions, by which he triumphantly proved that it was derived from all the languages of the ancients; the same process showed that it possessed four thousand and two different significations; he next reasoned most ably and comprehensively for ten minutes, backward and forward, using no other word but this, applied in its various

senses; after which he incontrovertibly established that this important part of speech was so useful as to be useless, and he concluded by a proposition, in which the academy coincided by acclamation, that it should be forever and incontinently expunged from the Leaphigh vocabulary. As the vote was carried by acclamation, the king's cousin arose, and declared that the writer who should so far offend against good taste, as hereafter to make use of the condemned word, should have two inches cut off the extremity of his tail. A shudder among the ladies, who, I afterward ascertained, loved to carry their *caudæ* as high as our women like to carry their heads, proved the severity of the decree.

An experienced and seemingly much respected member now arose to make the following proposal. He said it was known that the monikin species were fast approaching perfection; that the increase of mind and the decrease of matter were so very apparent as to admit of no denial; that, in his own case, he found his physical powers diminish daily, while his mental acquired new distinctness and force; that he could no longer see without spectacles, hear without a tube, or taste without high seasoning; from all this he inferred that they were drawing near to some important change, and he wished that portion of the science of Latent Sympathies which was connected with the unknown fluid just treated on, might be referred to a committee, on the whole, in order to make some provision for the wants of a time when monikins should finally lose their senses. There was nothing to say against a proposition so plausible, and it was accepted *nemine contradicente*, with the exception of a few in the minority.

There was now a good deal of whispering, much wagging of tails, and other indications that the real business of the meeting was about to be touched upon. All eyes were turned on Dr. Reasono, who, after a suitable pause, entered a tribune prepared for solemn occasions, and began his discourse.

The philosopher, who, having committed his essay to memory, spoke extempore, commenced with a beautiful and most eloquent apostrophe to learning, and to the enthusiasm which glows in the breasts of all her real votaries, rendering them alike indifferent to their personal ease, their temporal interests, danger, suffering, and tribulations of the spirit. After this exordium, which was pronounced to be *unique* for its simplicity and truth, he entered at once on the history of his own recent adventures.

First alluding to the admirable character of that Leaphigh usage which prescribes the Journey of Trial, our philosopher spoke of the manner in which he had been selected to accompany my Lord Chatterino on an occasion so important to his future hopes. He dwelt on the physical preparations, the previous study, and the moral machinery that he had employed with his pupil, before they quitted town; all of which, there is reason to think, were well fitted to their objects, as he was constantly interrupted by murmurs of applause. After some time spent in dilating on these points, I had, at length, the satisfaction to find him, Mrs. Lynx, and their two wards, fairly setting out on a journey which, as he very justly mentioned, proved "to be pregnant with events of so much importance to knowledge in general, to the happiness of the species, and to several highly interesting branches of monikin science, in particular." I say the satisfaction, for, to own the truth, I was eager to witness the effect that would be made on the monikin sensibilities, when he came to speak of my own discernment in detecting their real characters beneath the contumely and disgrace in which it had been my good fortune to find them, the promptitude with which I had stepped forward to their relief, and the liberality and courage with which I had furnished the means and encountered the risks that were necessary to restore them to their native land. The anticipation of this human triumph could not but diffuse a general satisfaction in our own tribune—even the common mariners, as they recalled the dangers through which they had passed, feeling a consciousness of deserving, mingled with that soothing sentiment which is ever the

companion of a merited reward. As the philosopher drew nearer to the time when it would be necessary to speak of us, I threw a look of triumph at Lord Chatterino, which, however, failed of its intended effect—the young peer continuing to whisper to his noble companions with just as much self-importance and coolness as if he had not been one of the rescued captives.

Dr. Reasono was justly celebrated, among his colleagues, for ingenuity and eloquence. The excellent morals that he threw into every possible opening of his subject, the beauty of the figures with which they were illustrated, and the masculine tendencies of his argument, gave general delight to the audience. The Journey of Trial was made to appear what it had been intended to be by the fathers and sages of the Leaphigh institutions, a probation replete with admonitions and instruction. The aged and experienced, who had grown callous by time, could not conceal their exultation; the mature and suffering looked grave and full of meditation; while the young and sanguine fairly trembled, and for once doubted. But, as the philosopher led his party from precipice to precipice in safety, as rocks were scaled and seductive valleys avoided, a common feeling of security began to extend itself among the audience; and we all followed him in his last experiment among the ice, with that sort of blind confidence which the soldier comes, in time, to entertain in the orders of a tried and victorious general.

The doctor was graphic in his account of the manner in which he and his wards plunged among these new trials. The lovely Chatterissa (for all his traveling companions were present) bent aside her head and blushed, as the philosopher alluded to the manner in which the pure flame that glowed in her gentle bosom resisted the chill influence of that cold region; and when he recited an ardent declaration that my Lord Chatterino had made on the center of a floe, and the kind and amorous answer of his mistress, I thought the applause of the old academicians would have actually brought the vaulted dome clattering about our ears.

At length he reached the point in the narrative, where the amiable wanderers fell in with the sealers on that unknown island to which chance and adverse fortune had unhappily led them, in their pilgrimage. I had taken measures secretly to instruct Mr. Poke and the rest of my companions, as to the manner in which it became us to demean ourselves, while the doctor was acquainting the academy with that first outrage committed by human cupidity, or the seizure of himself and friends. We were to rise in a body, and, turning our faces a little on one side, veil our eyes in sign of shame. Less than this, it struck me, could scarcely be done, without manifesting an improper indifference to monikin rights; and more than this, might have been identifying ourselves with the particular individuals of the species who had perpetrated the wrong. But there was no occasion to exhibit this delicate attention to our learned hosts. The doctor, with a refinement of feeling that did credit, indeed, to monikin civilization, gave an ingenious turn to the whole affair, which at once removed all cause of shame from our species; and which, if it left reason for any to blush, by a noble act of disinterestedness, threw the entire onus of the obligation on himself. Instead of dwelling on the ruthless manner in which he and his friends had been seized, the worthy doctor very tranquilly informed his listeners, that, finding himself by hazard, brought in contact with another species, and that the means of pushing important discoveries were unexpectedly placed in his power; conscious it had long been a desideratum with the *savans* to obtain a nearer view and more correct notions of human society; believing he had a discretion in the matter of his wards, and knowing that the inhabitants of Leaplow, a republic which all disliked, were seriously talking of sending out an expedition for this very purpose, he had promptly decided to profit by events, to push inquiry to the extent of his abilities, and to hazard all in the cause of learning and truth, by at once

engaging the vessel of the sealers, and sailing, without dread of consequences, forthwith into the very bosom of the world of man!

I have listened with awe to the thunder of the tropics—I have held my breath as the artillery of a fleet vomited forth its fire, and rent the air with sudden concussions—I have heard the roar of the tumbling river of the Canadas, and I have stood aghast at the crushing of a forest in a tornado;—but never before did I feel so life-stirring, so thrilling an emotion of surprise, alarm and sympathy, as that which arose within me, at the burst of commendation and delight with which this announcement of self-devotion and enterprise was received by the audience. Tails waved, *pattes* met each other in ecstasy, voice whistled to voice, and there was one common cry of exultation, of rapture and of glorification, at this proof, not of monikin, for that would have been frittering away the triumph, but at this proof of Leaphigh courage.

During the clamor I took an opportunity to express my satisfaction at the handsome manner in which our friend the doctor had passed over an acknowledged human delinquency, and the ingenuity with which he had turned the whole of the unhappy transaction to the glory of Leaphigh. Noah answered that the philosopher had certainly "shown a knowledge of human natur', and he presumed of monikin natur' in the matter; no one would now dispute his statement, since, as he knew by experience, no one was so likely to be set down as a liar, as he who endeavored to unsettle the good opinion that either a community or an individual entertained of himself. This was the way at Stunnin'tun, and he believed this was pretty much the way at New York, or he might say with the whole 'arth from pole to pole. As for himself, however, he owned he should like to have a few minutes' private conversation with the sealer in question, to hear his account of the matter; he didn't know any other in this part of the world who would bear a captain out, should he abandon a v'yage in this way on no better security than the promises of a monkey, and of a monkey, too, who must, of necessity, be an utter stranger to him."

When the tumult of applause had a little abated, Dr. Reasono proceeded with his narrative. He touched lightly on the accommodations of the schooner, which he gave us reason to think were altogether of a quality beneath the condition of her passengers; and he added that, falling in with a larger and fairer vessel, which was making a passage between Bombay and Great Britain, he profited by the occasion to exchange ships. This vessel touched at the island of St. Helena, where, according to the doctor's account of the matter, he found means to pass the greater part of a week on shore.

Of the island of St. Helena he gave a long, scientific, and certainly an interesting account. It was reported to be volcanic, by the human *savans*, he said, but a minute examination and a comparison of the geological formation, etc., had quite satisfied him that their own ancient account, which was contained in the mineralogical works of Leaphigh, was the true one; or, in other words, that this rock was a fragment of the polar world that had been blown away at the great eruption, and which had become separated from the rest of the mass at this spot, where it had fallen and become a fixture of the ocean. Here the doctor produced certain specimens of rock, which he submitted to the learned present, inviting their attention to its character, and asking, with great mineralogical confidence, if it did not intimately resemble a well-known stratum of a mountain within two leagues of the very spot they were in? This triumphant proof of the truth of his proposition was admirably received; and the philosopher was in particular rewarded by the smiles of all the females present; for ladies are usually well pleased with any demonstration that saves them the trouble of comparison and reflection.

Before quitting this branch of his subject, the doctor observed that, interesting as were these proofs of the accuracy of their histories, and of the great revolutions

of inanimate nature, there was another topic connected with St. Helena which, he felt certain, would excite a lively emotion in the breasts of all who heard him. At the period of his visit the island had been selected as a prison for a great conqueror and disturber of his fellow creatures; and public attention was much drawn to the spot by this circumstance, few *men* coming there who did not permit all their thoughts to be absorbed by the past acts and the present fortunes of the individual in question. As for himself, there was, of course, no great attraction in any events connected with mere human greatness, the little struggles and convulsions of the species containing no particular interest for a devotee of the monikin philosophy; but the manner in which all eyes were drawn in one direction afforded him a liberty of action that he had eagerly improved, in a way that he humbly trusted would not be thought altogether unworthy of their approbation. While searching for minerals among the cliffs, his attention had been drawn to certain animals that are called monkeys, in the language of these regions; which from very obvious affinities of a physical nature there was some reason to believe might have had a common origin with the monikin species. The academy would at once see how desirable it was to learn all the interesting particulars of the habits, language, customs, marriages, funerals, religious opinions, traditions, state of learning, and general moral condition of this interesting people, with a view to ascertaining whether they were merely one of those abortions to which, it is known, nature is in the practice of giving birth, in the outward appearance of their own species, or whether, as several of their best writers had plausibly maintained, they were indeed a portion of those whom they had been in the habit of designating as the "lost monikins."

He had succeeded in getting access to a family of these beings, and in passing an entire day in their society. The result of his investigations was, that they were truly of the monikin family, retaining much of the ingenuity and many of the spiritual notions of their origin, but with their intellects sadly blunted, and perhaps their improvable qualities annihilated, by the concussion of the elements that had scattered them abroad upon the face of the earth, houseless, hopeless, regionless wanderers. The vicissitudes of climate, and a great alteration of habits, had certainly wrought some physical changes; but there still remained sufficient scientific identity to prove they were monikins. They even retained, in their traditions, some glimmerings of the awful catastrophe by which they were separated from the rest of their fellow creatures; but they necessarily were vague and profitless. Having touched on several other points connected with these very extraordinary facts, the doctor concluded by saying that he saw but one way in which this discovery could be turned to any practical advantage, beyond the confirmation it afforded of the truth of their annals. He suggested the expediency of fitting out expeditions to go among these islands and seize upon a number of families, which, being transported into Leaphigh, might found a race of useful menials who, while they would prove much less troublesome than those who possessed all the knowledge of monikins, would probably be found more intelligent and useful than any domestic animal which they at present owned. This happy application of the subject met with decided commendation. I observed that most of the elderly females put their heads together on the spot, and appeared to be congratulating each other on the prospect of being speedily relieved from their household cares.

Dr. Reasono next spoke of his departure from St. Helena, and of his finally landing in Portugal. Here, agreeably to his account, he engaged several Savoyards to act as his *couriers* and guides during a tour he intended to make through Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, France, etc., etc., etc. I listened with admiration. Never before had I so lively a perception of the vast difference that is effected in our views of matters and things, by the agency of an active philosophy, as was now furnished by the narrative of the

speaker. Instead of complaining of the treatment he had received, and of the degradations to which he and his companions had been subjected, he spoke of it all as so much prudent submission, on his part, to the customs of the countries in which he happened to find himself, and as the means of ascertaining a thousand important facts, both moral and physical, which he proposed to submit to the academy in a separate memoir, another day. At present he was admonished by the clock to conclude, and he would therefore hasten his narrative as much as possible.

The doctor, with great ingenuousness, confessed that he could gladly have passed a year or two longer in those distant and highly interesting portions of the earth; but he could not forget that he had a duty to perform to the friends of two noble families. The Journey of Trial had been completed under the most favorable auspices, and the ladies naturally became anxious to return home. They had accordingly passed into Great Britain, a country remarkable for maritime enterprise, where he immediately commenced the necessary preparations for their sailing. A ship had been procured under the promise of allowing it to be freighted, free of custom-house charges, with the products of Leaphigh. A thousand applications had been made to him for permission to be of his party, the natives naturally enough wishing to see a civilized country; but prudence had admonished him to accept of those only who were the most likely to make themselves useful. The king of Great Britain, no mean prince in human estimation, had committed his only son and heir-apparent to his care, with view to his improvement by traveling; and the Lord High Admiral himself had asked permission to take command of an expedition that was of so much importance to knowledge in general, and to his own profession in particular.

Here Dr. Reasono ascended our tribune, and presented Bob to the academy as the Prince-Royal of Great Britain, and Captain Poke as her Lord High Admiral! He pointed out certain peculiarities about the former, the smut in particular, which had become pretty effectually incorporated with the skin, as so many signs of royal birth; and ordering the youngster to uncase, he drew forth the union-jack that the lad carefully kept about his nether part as a fender, and exhibited it as his armorial bearings—a modification of its uses that would not have been very far out of the way had another limb been substituted for the agent. As for Captain Poke, he requested the academicians to study his nautical air in general, as furnishing sufficient proof of his pursuits, and of the ordinary appearance of human seamen.

Turning to me, I was then introduced to all present as the traveling governor and personal attendant of Bob, and as a very respectable person in my way. He added that he believed, also, I had some pretension to be the discoverer of something that was called the social-stake system; which he dared to say, was a very creditable discovery for one of my opportunities.

By this prompt substitution of employments, I found I had effectually changed places with the cabin-boy; who, instead of waiting on me, was in future to receive that trifling attention at my hands. The mates were presented as two rear-admirals at nurse, and the crew was said to be composed of so many post-captains in the navy of Great Britain. To conclude, the audience was given to understand that we were all brought to Leaphigh, like the minerals from St. Helena, as so many specimens of the human species!

I shall not deny that Dr. Reasono had taken a very different view of himself and his acts, as well as of me and my acts, from those I had all along entertained myself; and yet, on reflection, it is so common to consider ourselves in lights very different from those in which we are viewed by others, that I could not, on the whole, complain as much of his representations as I had at first thought it might become me to do. At all events, I was completely spared the necessity of blushing for my generosity and disinter-

estedness, and in other respects was saved the pain of viewing any part of my own conduct under a consciousness of its attracting attention by its singularity on the score of merit. I must say, nevertheless, that I was both surprised and a little indignant; but the sudden and unexpected turn that had been given to the whole affair threw me so completely off my center that for the life of me I could not say a word in my own behalf. To make the matter worse, that monkey Chatterino nodded to me kindly, as if he would show the spectators that, on the whole, he thought me a very good sort of fellow!

After the lecture was over, the audience approached to examine us, taking a great many amiable liberties with our persons and otherwise showing that we were deemed curiosities worthy of their study. The king's cousin, too, was not neglectful of us, but he had it announced to the assembly that we were entirely welcome to Leaphigh; and that, out of respect to Dr. Reasono, we were all promoted to the dignity of "Honorary Monikins" for the entire period of our stay in the country. He also caused it to be proclaimed that if the boys annoyed us in the streets they should have their tails curled with birch curling-irons. As for the doctor himself, it was proclaimed that, in addition to his former title of F.U.D.G.E., he was now preferred to be even M.O.R.E., and that he was also raised to the dignity of an H.O.A.X., the very highest honor to which any *savant* of Leaphigh could attain.

At length curiosity was appeased, and we were permitted to descend from the tribune; the company ceased to attend to us, in order to pay attention to each other. As I had time, now, to recollect myself, I did not lose a moment in taking the two mates aside, to present a proposition that we should go, in a body, before a notary, and enter a protest against the unaccountable errors into which Dr. Reasono had permitted himself to fall, whereby the truth was violated, the rights of persons invaded, humanity dishonored, and the Leaphigh philosophy misled. I cannot say that my arguments were well received; and I was compelled to quit the two rear-admirals, and to go in quest of the crew, with the conviction that the former had been purchased. An appeal to the reckless, frank, loyal natures of the common seamen, I thought, would not fail to meet with better success. Here, too, I was fated to encounter disappointment. The men swore a few hearty oaths, and affirmed that Leaphigh was a good country. They expected pay and rations, as a matter of course, in proportion to their new rank; and having tasted the sweets of command, they were not yet prepared to quarrel with their good fortune, and to lay aside the silver tankard for the tar-pot.

Quitting the rascals, whose heads really appeared to be turned by their unexpected elevation, I determined to hunt up Bob, and by dint of Mr. Poke's ordinary application, compel him, at least, in despite of the union-jack, to return to a sense of his duty, and to reassume his old post as the servitor of my wants. I found the little blackguard in the midst of a bevy of monikins of all ages, who were lavishing their attentions on his worthless person, and otherwise doing all they could to eradicate everything like humility, or any good quality that might happen to remain in him. He certainly gave me a fair opportunity to commence the attack, for he wore the union-jack over his shoulder, in the manner of a royal mantle, while the females of inferior rank pressed about him to kiss its hem! The air with which he received this adulation fairly imposed on even me; and fearful that the monikinas might mob me, should I attempt to undeceive them—for monikinas, let them be of what species they may, always hug a delusion—I abandoned my hostile intentions for the moment, and hurried after Mr. Poke, little doubting my ability of bringing one of his natural rectitude of mind to a right way of thinking.

The captain heard my remonstrances with a decent respect. He even seemed to enter into my feelings with a proper degree of sympathy. He very frankly admitted that I had not been well treated

by Dr. Reasono, and he appeared to think that a private conversation with that individual might yet possibly have the effect of bringing him to a more reasonable representation of facts. But, as to my sudden and violent appeal to public opinion for justice, or an ill-advised recourse to a notary, he strenuously objected to both. The purport of his remarks was somewhat as follows:—

"He was not acquainted with the Leaphigh law of protests, and in consequence, we might spend our money in paying fees without reaping any advantage; the doctor, moreover, was a philosopher, an F. U. D. G. E., and an H. O. A. X., and these were fearful odds to contend against in any country, and more especially in a foreign country; he had an innate dislike for lawsuits; the loss of my station was certainly a grievance, but still it might be borne; as for himself, he never asked for the office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain, but as it had been thrust upon him, why, he would do his best to sustain the character; he knew his friends at Stunnin'tun would be glad to hear of his promotion, for, though in his country there were no lords, nor even any admirals, his countrymen were always exceedingly rejoiced whenever any of their fellow-citizens were preferred to those stations by anybody but themselves, seeming to think an honor conferred on one was an honor conferred on the whole nation; he liked to confer honor on his own nation, for no people on 'arth tuck up a notion of this sort and divided it among themselves in a way to give each a share, sooner than the people of the States; though they were very cautious about leaving any portion of the credit in first hands, and therefore he was disposed to keep as much as he could while it was in his power; he believed he was a better seaman than most of the lord high admirals who had gone before him, and he had no fears on that score; he wondered whether promotion made Miss Poke Lady High Admiral; as I seemed greatly *put out* about my own rank, he would give me the acting appointment of a chaplain (he didn't think I was qualified to be a sea-officer), and no doubt I had interest enough at home to get it confirmed; a great statesman in his country had said 'that few die and none resigned,' and he didn't like to be the first to set new fashions; for his part, he rather looked upon Dr. Reasono as his friend, and it was unpleasant to quarrel with one's friends; he was willing to do anything in reason but resign, and if I could persuade the doctor to say he had fallen into a mistake in my particular case, and that I had been sent to Leaphigh as a lord high embassador, lord high priest, or lord high anything else, except lord high admiral, why, he was ready to swear to it—though he now gave notice that, in the event of such an arrangement, he should claim to rank me in virtue of the date of his own commission: if he gave up his appointment a minute sooner than was absolutely necessary, he should lose his own self-respect, and never dare look Miss Poke in the face again; on the whole, he should do no such thing; and, finally, he wished me a good morning, as he was about to make a call on the lord high admiral of Leaphigh."

CHAPTER XVII.

NEW LORDS, NEW LAWS—GYRATION, ROTATION, AND ANOTHER NATION; ALSO AN INVITATION.

I FELT that my situation had now become exceedingly peculiar. It is true that my modesty had been unexpectedly spared, by the very ingenious turn Dr. Reasono had given to the history of our connection with each other; but I could not see that I had gained any other advantage by the expedient. All my own species had, in a sense, cut me; and I was obliged to turn despondingly, and not without humiliation, toward the inn, where the banquet ordered by Mr. Poke waited our appearance.

I had reached the great square, when a tap on the knee drew my attention to one at my side. The applicant for notice was a monikin, who had all the physical peculiarities of a subject of Leaphigh, and yet, who was to be distinguished from most of

the inhabitants of that country, by a longer and less cultivated nap to his natural garment, greater shrewdness about the expression of the eyes and the mouth, a general air of business, and, for a novelty, a bob-*cauda*. He was accompanied by positively the least well-favored being of the species I had yet seen. I was addressed by the former.

"Good morning, Sir John Goldencalf," he commenced, with a sort of jerk, that I afterward learned was meant for a diplomatic salutation; "you have not met with the very best treatment to-day, and I have been waiting for a good opportunity to make my condolences, and to offer my services."

"Sir, you are only too good. I do feel a little wronged; and I must say, sympathy is most grateful to my feelings. You will, however, allow me to express my surprise at your being acquainted with my real name, as well as with my misfortunes?"

"Why, sir, to own the truth, I belong to an examining people. The population is very much scattered in my country, and we have fallen into a practice of inquiry that is very natural to such a state of things. I think you must have observed that in passing along a common highway, you rarely meet another without a nod; while thousands are met in a crowded street without even a glance of the eye. We develop this principle, sir; and never let any fact escape us for the want of a laudable curiosity."

"You are not a subject of Leaphigh, then?"

"God forbid! No, sir, I am a citizen of Leaplow, a great and a glorious republic that lies three days' sail from this island; a new nation, which is in the enjoyment of all the advantages of youth and vigor, and which is a perfect miracle for the boldness of its conceptions, the purity of its institutions, and its sacred respects for the rights of monikins. I have the honor to be, moreover, the Envoy-Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary of the republic to the King of Leaphigh, a nation from which we originally sprung, but which we have left far behind us in the race of glory and usefulness. I ought to acquaint you with my name, sir, in return for the advantage I possess on this head, in relation to yourself."

Hereupon my new acquaintance put into my hand one of his visiting-cards, which contained as follows:—

General-Commodore-Judge-Colonel
PEOPLE'S FRIEND:
Envoy-Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Leaplow, near his Majesty the King of Leaphigh.

"Sir," said I, pulling off my hat with a profound reverence, "I was not aware to whom I had the honor of speaking. You appear to fill a variety of employments, and I make no doubt, with equal skill."

"Yes, sir, I believe I am about as good at one of my professions as at another."

"You will permit me to observe, however, General—a—a—Judge—a—a—I scarcely know, dear sir, which of these titles is the most to your taste?"

"Use which you please, sir. I began with general, but had got as low as colonel before I left home. People's Friend is the only appellation of which I am at all tenacious. Call me People's Friend, sir, and you may call me anything else you find most convenient."

"Sir, you are only too obliging. May I venture to ask if you have really, *propriâ personâ*, filled all these different stations in life?"

"Certainly, sir—I hope you do not mistake me for an impostor!"

"As far from it as possible. But a judge and a commodore, for instance, are characters whose duties are so utterly at variance in human affairs, that I will allow I find the conjunction, even in a monikin, a little extraordinary."

"Not at all, sir. I was duly elected to each, served my time out in them all, and have honorable discharges to show in every instance."

"You must have found some perplexity in the performance of duties so very different?"

"Ah!—I see you have been long enough

in Leaphigh to imbibe some of its prejudices. It is a sad country for prejudice. I got my foot mired in some of them myself, as soon as it touched the land. Why, sir, my card is an illustration of what we call, in Leaplow, rotation in office."

"Rotation in office!"

"Yes, sir, rotation in office; a system that we invented for our personal convenience, and which is likely to be firm, as it depends on principles that are eternal."

"Will you suffer me to inquire, colonel, if it has any affinity to the social-stake system?"

"Not in the least. That, as I understand it, is a stationary, while this is a rotatory system. Nothing is simpler. We have in Leaplow two enormous boxes made in the form of wheels. Into one we put the names of the citizens, and into the other the names of the offices. We then draw forth, in the manner of a lottery; and the thing is settled for a twelvemonth."

"I find this rotatory plan exceedingly simple—pray, sir, does it work as well as it promises?"

"To perfection. We grease the wheels, of course, periodically."

"And are not frauds sometimes committed by those who are selected to draw their tickets?"

"Oh! they are chosen precisely in the same way."

"But those who draw *their* tickets?"

"All rotatory—they are drawn exactly on the same principle."

"But there must be a beginning. Those, again, who draw *their* tickets—they may betray their trusts?"

"Impossible—*they* are always the most patriotic patriots of the land! No, no, sir—we are not such dunces as to leave anything to corruption. Chance does it all. Chance makes me a commodore to-day—a judge to-morrow. Chance makes the lottery boys, and chance makes the patriots. It is necessary to see in order to understand how much purer and useful is your chance patriot, for instance, than one that is bred to the calling."

"Why, this savors after all of the doctrine of descents, which is little more than matter of chance."

"It would be so, sir, I confess, were it not that our chances center in a system of patriots. Our approved patriots are our guarantees against abuses—"

"Hem!"—interrupted the companion of Commodore People's Friend, with an awkward distinctness, as if to recall himself to our recollection.

"Sir John, I crave pardon for great remissness—allow me to present my fellow-citizen, Brigadier Downright, a gentleman who is on his travels, like yourself; and as excellent a fellow as is to be found in the whole monikin region."

"Brigadier Downright, I crave the honor of your acquaintance. But, gentlemen, I too have been sadly negligent of politeness. A banquet that has cost a hundred promises is waiting my appearance; and, as some of the expected guests are unavoidably absent, if you would favor me with your excellent society we might spend an agreeable hour, in the further discussion of these important interests."

As neither of the strangers made the smallest objection to the proposal, we were all soon comfortably situated at the dinner-table. The commodore, who, it would seem, was habitually well fed, merely paid a little complimentary attention to the banquet; but Mr. Downright attacked it tooth and nail, and I had no great reason to regret the absence of Mr. Poke. In the meantime, the conversation did not flag.

"I think I understand the outline of your system, Judge People's Friend," I resumed, "with the exception of the part that relates to the patriots. Would it be asking too much to request a little explanation on that particular point?"

"Not in the least, sir. Our social arrangement is founded on a hint from nature; a base, as you will concede, that is broad enough to sustain a universe. As a people, we are a hive that formerly swarmed from Leaphigh; and finding ourselves free and independent, we set about forthwith building the social system, on not only a sure foundation, but

on sure principles. Observing that nature dealt in duplicates, we pursued the hint, as the leading idea—"

"In duplicates, commodore!"

"Certainly, Sir John—a monikin has two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, two lungs, two arms, two hands, two legs, two feet, and so on to the end of the chapter. On this hint, we ordered that there should be drawn, morally, in every district of Leaplow, two distinct and separate lines, that should run at right angles to each other. These were termed the 'political landmarks' of the country; and it was expected that every citizen should range himself along one or the other. All this you will understand, however, was a moral contrivance, not a physical one."

"Is the obligation of this moral contrivance imperative?"

"Not legally, it is true; but then, he he who does not respect it is like one who is out of fashion, and he is so generally esteemed a poor devil, that the usage has a good deal more than the force of a law. At, first, it was intended to make it a part of the constitution; but one of our most experienced statesmen so clearly demonstrated that, by so doing, we should not only weaken the nature of the obligation, but most probably raise a party against it, that the idea was abandoned. Indeed, if anything, both the letter and the spirit of the fundamental law have been made to lean a little against the practice; but having been cleverly introduced, in the way of construction, it is now bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Well, sir, these two great political landmarks being fairly drawn, the first effort of one who aspires to be thought a patriot is, to acquire the practice of 'toeing the mark' promptly and with facility. But should I illustrate my positions by a few experiments, you might comprehend the subject all the better. For though, in fact, the true evolutions are purely moral, as I have just had the honor to explain, yet we have instituted a physical parallel that is very congenial to our habits, with which the neophyte always commences."

Here the commodore took a bit of chalk and drew two very distinct lines, crossing each other at right angles, through the center of the room. When this was done, he placed his feet together, and then he invited me to examine if it were possible to see any part of the planks between the extremities of his toes and the lines. After a rigid look, I was compelled to confess it was not.

"This is what we call 'toeing the mark'; it is 'social position, No. 1.' Almost every citizen gets to be expert in practicing it, on one or the other of the two great political lines. After this, he who would push his fortunes further, commences his career on the great rotatory principle."

"Your pardon, commodore; we call the word rotary in English."

"Sir, it is not expressive enough for our meaning; and therefore we term it 'rotatory.' I shall now give you an example of position No. 2."

Here the commodore made a spring, throwing his body, as a soldier would express it, to the "right about," bringing, at the same time, his feet entirely on the other side of the line; always rigidly toeing the mark.

"Sir," said I, "this was extremely well done; but is this evolution as useful as certainly it is dexterous?"

"It has the advantage of changing front, Sir John; a maneuver quite as useful in politics as in war. Most all in the line get to practice this, too, as my friend Downright, there, could show you, were he so disposed."

"I don't like to expose my flanks, or my rear, more than another," growled the brigadier.

"If agreeable, I will now show you gyration 2d, or position No. 3."

On my expressing a strong desire to see it, the commodore put himself again in position No. 1; and then he threw what Captain Poke was in the habit of calling a "flap-jack," or a somersault; coming down in a way tenaciously to toe the mark.

I was much gratified with the dexterity of the commodore, and frankly expressed as much; inquiring at the same time if many attained to the same skill. Both

the commodore and the brigadier laughed at the simplicity of the question; the former answering that the people of Leaplow were exceedingly active and adventurous, and both lines had got to be so expert, that, at the word of command, they would throw their somersaults in as exact time, and quite as promptly as a regiment of guards would go through the evolution of slapping their cartridge-boxes.

"What, sir," I exclaimed, in admiration, "the entire population!"

"Virtually, sir. There is, now and then, a stumbler; but he is instantly kicked out of sight, and uniformly counts for nothing."

"But as yet, commodore, your evolutions are altogether too general to admit of the chance selection of patriots, since patriotism is usually a monopoly."

"Very true, Sir John; I shall therefore come to the main point without delay. Thus far, it is pretty much an affair of the whole population, as you say; few refusing to toe the mark, or to throw the necessary flap-jacks, as you have ingeniously termed them. The lines, as you may perceive, cross each other at right angles; and there is consequently some crowding, and occasionally a good deal of jostling, at and near the point of junction. We begin to term a monikin a patriot when he can perform this evolution."

Here the commodore threw his heels into the air with such rapidity that I could not very well tell what he was about, though it was sufficiently apparent that he was acting entirely on the rotatory principle. I observed that he alighted, with singular accuracy, on the very spot where he had stood before, toeing the mark with beautiful precision.

"That is what we call gyration 3d, or position No. 4. He who can execute it is considered an adept in our politics; and he invariably takes his position near the enemy, or at the junction of the hostile lines."

"How, sir, are these lines, then, manned as they are with citizens of the same country, deemed hostile?"

"Are cats and dogs hostile, sir? Certainly, although standing, as it might be, face to face, acting on precisely the same principle, or the rotatory impulse, and professing to have exactly the same object in view, viz., the common good, they are social, political, and I might almost say, the moral antipodes of each other. They rarely intermarry, never extol, and frequently refuse to speak to one another. In short, as the brigadier could tell you, if he were so disposed, they are antagonists, body and soul. To be plain, sir, they are enemies."

"This is very extraordinary for fellow-citizens!"

"'Tis the monikin nature," observed Mr. Downright; "no doubt, sir, men are much wiser?"

As I did not wish to divert the discourse from the present topic, I merely bowed to this remark, and begged the judge to proceed.

"Well, sir," continued the latter, "you can easily imagine that they who are placed near the point where the two lines meet have no sinecures. To speak the truth, they blackguard each other with all their abilities, he who manifests the most inventive genius in this high accomplishment being commonly thought the cleverest fellow. Now, sir, none but a patriot could, in the nature of things, endure this without some other motive than his country's good, and so we esteem them."

"But the most patriotic patriots, commodore?"

The Minister of Leaphigh now toed the mark again, placing himself within a few feet of the point of junction between the two lines; and then he begged me to pay particular attention to his evolution. When all was ready, the commodore threw himself, as it were, invisibly into the air, again head over heels, so far as I could discover, and alighted on the antagonist line, toeing the mark with a most astonishing particularity. It was a clever gyration, beyond a doubt; and the performer looked toward me, as if inviting commendation.

"Admirably executed, judge, and in a

way to induce one to believe that you must have paid great attention to the practice."

"I have performed this maneuver, Sir John, five times in real life; and my claim to be a patriotic patriot is founded on its invariable success. A single false step might have ruined me; but as you say, practice makes perfect, and perfection is the parent of success."

"And yet I do not rightly understand how so sudden a desertion of one's own side, to go over, in this active manner, head over heels, I may say, to another side, constitutes a fair claim to be deemed so pure a character as that of a patriot."

"What, sir, is not he who throws himself defenselessly into the very middle of the ranks of the enemy, the hero of the combat? Now, as this is a political struggle, and not a warlike struggle, but one in which the good of the country is alone uppermost, the monikin who thus manifests the greatest devotion to the cause must be the purest patriot. I give you my honor, sir, all my own claims are founded entirely on this particular merit."

"He is right, Sir John; you may believe every word he says," observed the brigadier, nodding.

"I begin to understand your system, which is certainly well adapted to the monikin habits, and must give rise to a noble emulation in the practice of the rotatory principle. But I understood you to say, colonel, that the people of Leaplow are from the hive of Leaphigh?"

"Just so, sir."

"How happens it, then, that you dock yourselves of the nobler member, while the inhabitants of this country cherish it as the apple of the eye—nay, as the seat of reason itself?"

"You allude to our tails? Why, sir, nature has dealt out these ornaments with a very unequal hand, as you may perceive on looking out of the window. We agree that the tail is the seat of reason, and that the extremities are the most intellectual parts; but, as governments are framed to equalize these natural inequalities, we denounce them as anti-republican. The law requires, therefore, that every citizen, on attaining his majority, shall be docked agreeably to a standard measure that is kept in each district. Without some such expedient there might be an aristocracy of intellect among us, and there would be an end of our liberties. This is the qualification of a voter, too, and of course we all seek to obtain it."

Here the brigadier leaned across the table and whispered that a great patriot, on a most trying occasion, had succeeded in throwing a somersault out of his own into the antagonist line, and that, as he carried with him all the sacred principles for which his party had been furiously contending for many years, he had been unceremoniously dragged back by his tail, which unfortunately came within reach of those quondam friends on whom he had turned his back; and that the law had, in truth, been passed in the interests of the patriots. He added that the lawful measure allowed a longer stump than was commonly used; but that it was considered underbred for any one to wear a dock that reached more than two inches and three-quarters of an inch into society, and that most of their political aspirants, in particular, chose to limit themselves to one inch and one-quarter of an inch, as a proof of excessive humility.

Thanking Mr. Downright for his clear and sensible explanation, the conversation was resumed.

"I had thought, as your institutions are founded on reason and nature, judge," I continued, "that you would be more disposed to cultivate this member than to mutilate it; and this the more especially as I understand all the monikins believe it to be the very quintessence of reason."

"No doubt, sir; we do cultivate our tails, but it is on the vegetable principle, or as the skillful gardener lops the branch that it may grow out more vigorous shoots. It is true, we do not expect to see the tail itself sprouting out anew; but then we look to the increase of its reason, and to its more general diffusion in society. The extremities of our *caudæ*, as fast as they are lopped, are sent to a great intellectual mill, where the mind is extracted from the matter, and the former is sold,

on public account, to the editors of the daily journals. This is the reason our Leaplow journalists are so distinguished for their ingenuity and capacity, and the reason, too, why they so faithfully represent the average of the Leaplow knowledge."

"And honesty, you ought to add," growled the brigadier.

"I see the beauty of the system, judge, and very beautiful it is! This essence of lopped tails represents the average of Leaplow brains, being a compound of all the tails in the country; and as a daily journal is addressed to the average intellect of the community, there is a singular fitness between the readers and the readees. To complete my stock of information on this head, however, will you just allow me to inquire what is the effect of this system on the totality of the Leaplow intelligence?"

"Wonderful! As we are a commonwealth, it is necessary to have a unity of sentiment on all leading matters, and by thus compounding all the extremes of our reasons, we get what is called 'public opinion;' which public opinion is uttered through the public journals—"

"And a most patriotic patriot is always chosen to be the inspector of the mill," interrupted the brigadier.

"Better and better! you send all the finer parts of your several intellects to be ground up and kneaded together; the compound is sold to the journalists, who utter it anew, as the result of the united wisdom of the country!"

"Or as public opinion. We make great account of reason in all our affairs, invariably calling ourselves the most enlightened nation on earth; but then we are specially averse to anything like an insulated effort of the mind, which is offensive, anti-republican, aristocratic, and dangerous. We put all our trust in this representation of brains, which is singularly in accordance with the fundamental base of our society, as you must perceive."

"We are a commercial people, too," put in the brigadier, "and being much accustomed to the laws of insurance, we like to deal in averages."

"Very true, brother Downright; very true. We are very much averse to anything like inequality. Ods zooks! it is almost as great an offense for a monikin to know more than his neighbors, as it is for him to act on his own impulses. No—no—we are truly a free and independent commonwealth, and we hold every citizen as amenable to public opinion, in all he does, says, thinks, or wishes."

"Pray, sir, do both of the two great political lines send their tails to the same mills, and respect the same-general sentiments?"

"No, sir; we have two public opinions in Leaplow."

"*Two* public opinions?"

"Certainly, sir; the horizontal and the perpendicular."

"This infers a most extraordinary fertility of thought, and one that I hold to be almost impossible."

Here the commodore and the brigadier incontinently both laughed as hard as they could; and that, too, directly in my face.

"Dear me, Sir John—why, my dear Sir John! you are really the drollest creature!" gasped the judge, holding his sides—"the very funniest question I have ev—ev—ever encountered!" He now stopped to wipe his eyes; after which he was better able to express himself. "The same public opinion, forsooth! Dear me—dear me, that I should not have made myself understood! I commenced, my good Sir John, by telling you that we deal in duplicates, on a hint from nature; and that we act on the rotary principle. In obedience to the first, we have always *two* public opinions; and, although the great political landmarks are drawn in what may be called a stationary sense, they, too, are in truth rotary. One, which is thought to lie parallel to the fundamental law, or the constitutional meridian of the country, is termed the horizontal, and the other the perpendicular line. Now, as nothing is really stationary in Leaplow, these two great landmarks are always acting, likewise, on the rotary principle, changing places periodically; the perpendicular becoming the

horizontal, and *vice versa;* they who toe their respective marks necessarily taking new views of things as they vary the line of sight. These great revolutions are, however, very slow, and are quite as imperceptible to those who accompany them as are the revolutions of our planet to its inhabitants.

"And the gyrations of the patriots, of which the judge has just now spoken," added the brigadier, "are much the same as the eccentric movements of the comets, that embellish the solar system without deranging it by their uncertain courses."

"No, sir, we should be poorly off indeed, if we had but *one* public opinion," resumed the judge. "Ecod, I do not know what would become of the most patriotic patriots in such a dilemma!"

"Pray, sir, let me ask, as you draw for places, if you have as many places as there are citizens?"

"Certainly, sir. Our places are divided, firstly, into the two great subdivisions of the 'inner' and the 'outer.' Those who toe the mark on the most popular line occupy the former, and those who toe the mark on the least popular line take all the rest, as a matter of course. The first, however, it is necessary to explain, are the only places worth having. As great care is had to keep the community pretty nearly equally divided—"

"Excuse the interruption—but in what manner is this effected?"

"Why, as only a certain number can *toe the mark*, we count all those who are not successful in getting up to the line, as outcasts; and, after fruitlessly hanging about our skirts for a time, they invariably go over to the other line; since it is better to be first in a village than second in Rome. We thus keep up something like an equilibrium in a state which, as you must know, is necessary to liberty. The minority take the outer places, and all the inner are left to the majority. Then comes another subdivision of the places; that is to say, one division is formed of the honorary, and another of the profitable places. The honorary, or about nine-tenths of all the inner places, are divided, with great impartiality, among the mass of those who have toed the mark on the strongest side, and who usually are satisfied with the glory of the victory. The names of the remainder are put into the wheels to be drawn for against the prizes, on the rotary principle."

"And the patriots, sir;—are they included in this chance-medley?"

"Far from it. As a reward for their dangers, they have a little wheel to themselves, although they, also, are compelled to submit to the rotary principle. Their cases differ from those of the others, merely in the fact that they always get *something*."

I would gladly have pursued the conversation, which was opening a flood of light upon my political understanding; but just then a fellow with the air of a footman entered, carrying a packet tied to the end of his *cauda*. Turning round, he presented his burden, with profound respect, and withdrew. I found that the packet contained three notes, with the following addresses:

"To his Royal Highness Bob, Prince of Wales, etc., etc., etc."
"To my Lord High Admiral Poke, etc., etc., etc.
"To Master Goldencalf, Clerk, etc., etc., etc.

Apologizing to my guests, the seal of my own note was eagerly opened. It read as follows:

"The Right Honorable the Earl of Chatterino, lord of the bed chamber in waiting on his majesty, informs Master John Goldencalf, clerk, that he is commanded to attend the drawing-room, this evening, when the nuptial ceremony will take place between the Earl of Chatterino and the Lady Chatterissa, the first maid of honor to her majesty the queen.

"N. B.—*The gentlemen will appear in full dress.*"

On explaining the contents of my note to the judge, he informed me that he was aware of the approaching ceremony, as he had also an invitation to be present, in his official character. I begged, as a particular favor, England having no representative at Leaphigh, that he would do me the honor to present me, in his capa-

city of a foreign minister. The envoy made no sort of objection, and I inquired as to the costume necessary to be observed; as, so far as I had seen, it was good-breeding at Leaphigh to go naked. The envoy had the goodness to explain that, although, in point of mere attire, clothing was extremely offensive to the people of both Leaphigh and Leaplow, yet, in the former country, no one could present himself at court, foreign ministers excepted, without a *cauda*. As soon as we understood each other on these points, we separated, with an understanding that I was to be in readiness (together with my companions, of whose interest I had not been forgetful), to attend the envoy and the brigadier, when they should call for me, at an hour that was named.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A COURT, A COURT-DRESS, AND A COURTIER —JUSTICE IN VARIOUS ASPECTS, AS WELL AS HONOR.

My guests were no sooner gone than I sent for the landlady, to inquire if any court-dresses were to be had in the neighborhood. She told me plenty might certainly be had, that were suited to the monikin dimensions, but she much doubted whether there was a tail in all Leaphigh, natural or artificial, that was at all fit for a person of my stature. This was vexatious; and I was in a brown study, calling up all my resources for the occasion, when Mr. Poke entered the inn, carrying in his hand two as formidable ox-tails as I remember ever to have seen. Throwing one toward me, he said the lord high admiral of Leaphigh had acquainted him that there was an invitation out for the prince and himself, as well as for the governor of the former, to be present at court within an hour. He had hurried off from what he called a very good dinner, considering there was nothing solid (the captain was particularly fond of pickled pork), to let me know the honor that was intended us; and on the way home, he had fallen in with Dr. Reasono, who, on being acquainted with his errand, had not failed to point out the necessity of the whole party coming *en habit de cour*. Here was a dilemma with a vengeance; for the first idea that struck the captain was, "the utter impossibility of finding anything in this way, in all Leaphigh, befitting a lord high admiral of his length of keel; for, as to going in an ordinary monikin *queue*, why, he should look like a three-decked ship, with a brig's spar stepped for a lower mast!" Dr. Reasono, however, had kindly removed the embarrassment, by conducting him to the cabinet of natural history, where three suitable appendages had been found, viz., two fine relics of oxen* and another, a capital specimen, that had formerly been the mental lever, or, as the captain expressed it, "the steering oar" of a kangaroo. The latter had been sent off, express, with a kind consideration for the honor of Great Britain, to Prince Bob, who was at a villa of one of the royal family, in the neighborhood of Aggregation.

I was greatly indebted to Noah, for his dexterity in helping me to a good fit with my court-dress. There was not time for much particularity, for we were in momentary expectation of Judge People's Friend's return. All we could do, therefore, was to make a belt of canvas (the captain being always provided with needles, palm, etc., in his bag), and to introduce the smaller end of the tail through a hole in the belt, drawing its base tight up to the cloth, which in its turn was stitched round our bodies. This was but an indifferent substitute for the natural appendage, it is true; and the hide had got to be so dry and unyielding, that it was impossible for the least observant person to imagine there was a particle of brains in it. The arrangement had also another disadvantage. The *cauda* stuck out nearly at right angles with the position of the body, and beside occupying much more space than would probably be permitted in the royal presence, "it gave any jackanapes," as Noah observed, "the great advantage over us, of making us

* *Caudæ Bovum*—Buf.

yaw at pleasure, since he might use the outriggers as levers." But a seaman is inexhaustible in expedients. Two "backstays," or "bob-stays" (for the captain facetiously gave them both appellations), were soon "turned in," and the tails were "stayed in, in a way to bring them as upright as trysail masts;" to which spars, indeed, according to Noah's account of the matter, they bore no small resemblance.

The envoy-extraordinary of Leaplow, accompanied by his friend, Brigadier Downright, arrived just as we were dressed; and a most extraordinary figure the former cut, if truth must be said. Although obliged to be docked, according to the Leaplow law, to six inches, and brought down to a real bob, by both the public opinions of his country, for this was one of the few points on which these antagonistic sentiments were perfectly agreed, he now appeared in just the largest brush I remember to have seen appended to a monikin! I felt a strong inclination to joke the rotatory republican on this coquetry; but then I remembered how sweet any stolen indulgence becomes; and, for the life of me, I could not give utterance to a *bon mot*. The elegance of the minister was rendered the more conspicuous by the simplicity of the brigadier, who had contrived to *mustache* his dock, a very short one at the best, in such a manner as to render it nearly invisible. On my expressing a doubt to Mr. Downright about his being admitted in such a costume, he snapped his fingers and gave me to understand he knew better. He appeared as a brigadier of Leaplow (I found afterward that he was in truth no soldier, but that it was a fashion among his countrymen to travel under the title of brigadier), and this was his uniform; and he should like to see the chamberlain who would presume to call in question the state of his wardrobe! As it was no affair of mine, I prudently dropped the subject, and we were soon in the court of the palace.

I shall pass over the parade of guards, the State bands, the sergeant-trumpeters, the crowd of footmen and pages, and conduct the reader at once to the antechamber. Here we found the usual throng composed of those who live in the smile of princes. There was a great deal of politeness, much bowing and courtesying, and the customary amount of genteel *empressement* to be the first to bask in the sunshine of royalty. Judge People's Friend, in his character of a foreign minister, was privileged, and we had enjoyed the private *entrée*, and were now, of right, placed nearest to the great doors of the royal apartments. Most of the diplomatic corps were already in attendance, and, quite as a matter of course, there were a great many cordial manifestations of the ardent attachment that bound them and their masters together, in the inviolable bonds of a most sacred amity. Judge People's Friend, according to his own account of the matter, represented a great nation—a very great nation—and yet I did not perceive that he met with a warm —a very warm—reception. However, as he seemed satisfied with himself, and all around him, it would have been unkind, not to say rude, in a stranger to disturb his self-esteem; and I took especial care, therefore, not to betray, by the slightest hint, my opinion that a good many near his person seemed to think him and his artificial *queue* somewhat in the way. The courtiers of Leaphigh, who are an exceeding exclusive and fastidious corps, appeared to regard the privileges of the judge with an evil eye; and one or two of them actually held their noses as he flourished his brush a little too near their sacred faces, as if they found its odor out of fashion. While making these silent observations, a page cried out from the lower part of the saloon, "Room for his Royal Highness, the Crown Prince of Great Britain!"

The crowd opened, and that young blackguard Bob walked up the avenue, in state. He wore the turnspit garment as the base of his toilet; but the superstructure was altogether more in keeping with the rascal's assumed character. The union-jack was thrown over his shoulder in the fashion of a mantle, and it was supported by the cook and steward of the

Walrus (two blacks), both clothed as alligators. The kangaroo's tail was rigged in a way to excite audible evidences of envy in the heart of Mr. Poke. The stepping of it, the captain whispered, "did the young dog great credit, for it looked as natural as the best wig he had ever seen; and then, in addition to the bobstay, it had two guys, which acted like the yoke-lines of a boat, or in such a way that, by holding one in each hand, the brush could be worked 'starboard and larboard' like a rudder." I have taken this description mainly from the mouth of the captain, and most sincerely hope it may be intelligible to the reader.

Bob appeared to be conscious of his advantages; for, on reaching the upper end of the room, he began whisking his tail, and flourishing it to the right and left, so as to excite a very perceptible and lively admiration in the mind of Judge People's Friend—an effect that so much the more proved the wearer's address, for that high functionary was bound *ex-officio* to entertain a sovereign contempt for all courtly vanities. I saw the eye of the captain kindle, however; and when the insolent young coxcomb actually had the temerity to turn his back on his master, and to work his brush under his very nose, human nature could endure no more. The right leg of my lord high admiral slowly retired, with somewhat of the caution of the cat about to spring, and then it was projected forward, with a rapidity that absolutely lifted the crown prince from the floor.

The royal self-possession of Bob could not prevent an exclamation of pain, as well as of surprise, and some of the courtiers ran forward involuntarily to aid him —for courtiers always run involuntarily to the succor of princes. At least a dozen of the ladies offered their smelling-bottles, with the most amiable assiduity and concern. To prevent any disagreeable consequences, however, I hastened to acquaint the crowd that in Great Britain it is the usage to cuff and kick the whole royal family; and that, in short, it is no more than the customary tribute of the subject to the prince. In proof of what I said, I took good care to give the saucy young scoundrel a touch of my own homage. The monikins, who knew that different customs prevail in different nations, hastened to compliment the young scion of royalty in the same manner; and both the cook and steward relieved their *ennui* by falling into the track of imitation. Bob could not stand the last applications; and he was about to beat a retreat, when the master of ceremonies appeared, to conduct him to the royal presence.

The reader is not to be misled by the honors that were paid to the imaginary crown prince, and to suppose that the court of Leaphigh entertained any peculiar respect for that of Great Britain. It was merely done on the principle that governed the conduct of our own learned sovereign, King James I., when he refused to see the amiable Pocahontas of Virginia, because she had degraded royalty by intermarrying with a subject. The respect was paid to the caste and not to the individual, to his species, or to his nation.

Let his privileges come from what cause they would, Bob was glad enough to get out of the presence of Captain Poke —who had already pretty plainly threatened, in the Stunnin' tun dialect, to unship his *cauda*—into that of the Majesty of Leaphigh. A few minutes afterward, the doors were thrown open, and the whole company advanced into the royal apartments.

The etiquette of the Court of Leaphigh differs, in many essential particulars, from the etiquette of any other court in the monikin region. Neither the king, nor his royal consort, is ever visible to any one in the country, so far as is vulgarly known. On the present occasion, two thrones were placed at the opposite extremities of the saloon, and a magnificent crimson damask curtain was so closely drawn before each, that it was quite impossible to see who occupied it. On the lowest step there stood a chamberlain or a lady of the bed-chamber, who severally, made all the speeches, and otherwise enacted the parts of the illustrious couple. The reader will understand therefore, that all which is here attributed

to either of these personages, was in fact performed by one or the other of the substitutes named, and that I never had the honor of actually standing face to face with their majesties. Everything that is now about to be related, in short, was actually done by deputy, on the part of the monarch and his wife.

The king himself merely represents a sentiment, all the power belonging to his eldest first-cousin of the masculine gender, and any intercourse with him is entirely of a disinterested or of a sentimental character. He is the head of the Church —after a very secular fashion, however; —all the bishops and clergy therefore got down on their knees and said their prayers; though the captain suggested that it might be their catechisms; I never knew which. I observed, also, that all his law officers did the same thing; but as *they* never pray, and do not know their catechisms, I presume the genuflections were to beg something better than the places they actually filled. After this, came a long train of military and naval officers, who, soldier-like, kissed his paw. The civilians next had a chance, and then it was our turn to be presented.

"I have the honor to present the lord high admiral of Great Britain to your majesty," said Judge People's Friend, who had waived his official privilege of going first, in order to do us this favor in person; it having been decided, on a review of all the principles that touched the case, that nothing human could take precedence of a monikin at court, always making the exception in favor of royalty, as in the case of Prince Bob.

"I am happy to see you at my court, Admiral Poke," the king politely rejoined, manifesting the tact of high rank in recognizing Noah by his family name, to the great surprise of the old sealer.

"King!"

"You were about to remark—?" most graciously inquired his majesty, a little at a loss to understand what his visitor would be at.

"Why, I could not contain my astonishment at your memory, Mr. King, which has enabled you to recall a name that you probably never before heard!"

There was now a great and, to me, a very unaccountable confusion in the circle. It would seem, that the captain had unwittingly trespassed on two of the most important of the rules of etiquette, in very mortal points. He had confessed to the admission of an emotion as vulgar as that of astonishment in the royal presence, and he had intimated that his majesty had a memory; a property of the mind which, as it might prove dangerous to the liberties of Leaphigh, were it left in the keeping of any but a responsible minister, it had long been decided it was felony to impute to the king. By the fundamental law of the land, the king's eldest first-cousin of the masculine gender, may have as many memories as he please, as he may use them, or abuse them as he shall see fit, both in private or in the public service; but it is held to be utterly unconstitutional and unparliamentary, and, by consequence, extremely underbred, to insinuate, even in the most remote manner, that the king himself has either a memory, a will, a determination, a resolution, a desire, a conceit, an intention, or, in short, any other intellectual property, that of a "royal pleasure" alone excepted. It is both constitutional and parliamentary to say the king has a "royal pleasure" provided the context goes that this "royal pleasure" is entirely at the disposition of his eldest first-cousin of the masculine gender.

When Mr. Poke was made acquainted with his mistake, he discovered a proper contrition; and the final decision of the affair was postponed in order to have the opinion of the judges on the propriety of taking bail, which I promptly offered to put in, in behalf of my old shipmate. This disagreeable little interruption temporarily disposed of, the business of the drawing-room went on.

Noah was next conducted to the queen, who was much inclined (always by deputy) to overlook the little mistake into which he had fallen with her royal consort, and to receive him graciously.

"May it please your majesty. I have

the honor to present to your majesty's royal notice the Lord Noah Poke, the lord high admiral of a distant and but little known country, called Great Britain," said the gold stick of the evening —Judge People's Friend being afraid of committing Leaplow, and declining to introduce the captain to any one else.

"Lord Poke is a countryman of our royal cousin, the Prince Bob!" observed the queen, in an exceedingly gracious manner.

"No, marm," put in the sealer, promptly, "your cousin Bob is no cousin of mine; and if it were lawful for your majesty to have a memory, or an inclination, or anything else in that way, I should beg the favor of you to order the young blackguard to be soundly thrashed."

The majesty of Leaphigh stood aghast, by proxy! It would seem Noah had now actually fallen into a more serious error than the mistake he had made with the king. By the law of Leaphigh the queen is not a *femme coverte*. She can sue and be sued in her own name, holds her separate estate, without the intervention of trustees, and *is* supposed to have a memory, a will, an inclination, or anything else in that way, except a "royal pleasure," to which she cannot, by right, lay claim. As to her, the king's first cousin is a dead letter; he having no more control over her conscience than he has over the conscience of an apple-woman. In short, her majesty is quite as much the mistress of her own convictions and conscience as it probably ever falls to the lot of women in such high stations to be the mistress of interests that are of so much importance to those around them. Noah, innocently enough, I do firmly believe, had seriously wounded all those nice sensibilities which are naturally dependent on such an improved condition of society. Forbearance could go no further, and I saw, by the dark looks around me, that the captain had committed a serious crime. He was immediately arrested, and conducted from the presence to an adjoining room, into which I obtained admission, after a good deal of solicitation and some very strong appeals to the sacred character of the rights of hospitality.

It now appeared, that in Leaphigh, the merits of a law are decided on a principle very similar to the one we employ in England in judging of the quality of our wines, viz., its age. The older a law, the more it is to be respected, no doubt because, having proved its fitness by outlasting all the changes of society, it has become more mellow, if not more palatable. Now, by a law of Leaphigh that is coeval with the monarchy, he who offends the queen's majesty at a levee, is to lose his head; and he who, under the same circumstances, offends the king's majesty, necessarily the more heinous offense, is to lose his tail. In consequence of the former punishment, the criminal is invariably buried, and he is consigned to the usual course of monikin regeneration and resuscitation; but in consequence of the latter, it is thought that he is completely thrown without the pale of reason, and is thereby consigned to the class of the retrogressive animals. His mind diminishes, and his body increases; the brain, for want of the means of development, takes the ascending movement of sap again; his forehead dilates; bumps reappear; and, finally, after passing gradually downward in the scale of intellect, he becomes a mass of insensible matter. Such, at least, is the theory of his punishment.

By another law, that is even older than the monarchy, any one who offends in the king's palace may be tried by a very summary process, the king's pages acting as his judges; in which case the sentence is to be executed without delay.

Such was the dilemma to which Noah, by an indiscretion at court, was suddenly reduced; and, but for my prompt interference, he would probably have been simultaneously decapitated at both extremities, in obedience to an etiquette which prescribes that, under the circumstances of a court trial, neither the king's nor the queen's rights shall be entitled to precedence. In defense of my client I urged his ignorance of the usages of the country, and, indeed, of all other civilized

countries, Stuninn'tun alone excepted. I stated that the criminal was an object altogether unworthy of their notice; that he was not a lord high admiral at all, but a mere pitiful sealer; I laid some stress on the importance of maintaining friendly relations with the sealers, who cruise so near the monikin region; I tried to convince the judges that Noah meant no harm in imputing moral properties to the king, and that so long as he did not impute immoral properties to his royal consort, she might very well afford to pardon him. I then quoted Shakespeare's celebrated lines on mercy, which seemed to be well enough received, and committed the whole affair to their better judgment.

I should have got along very creditably, and most probably obtained the immediate discharge of my friend, had not the attorney-general of Leaphigh been drawn by curiosity into the room. Although he had nothing to say to the merits of my arguments, he objected to every one of them, on the ground of formality. This was too long, and that was too short; one was too high, and another too low; a fifth was too broad, and a sixth too narrow; in short, there was no figure of speech of this nature to which he did not resort, in order to prove their worthlessness, with the exception that I do not remember he charged any of my reasons with being too deep.

Matters were now beginning to look serious for poor Noah, when a page came skipping in, to say that the wedding was about to take place, and that if his comrades wished to witness it, they must sentence the prisoner without delay. Many a man, it is said, has been hanged, in order that the judge might dine; but, in the present instance, I do believe Captain Poke was spared, in order that his judges might not miss a fine spectacle. I entered into recognizance, in fifty thousand promises, for the due appearance of the criminal on the following morning; and we all returned, in a body, to the presence chamber, treading on each other's tails, in the eagerness to be foremost.

Any one who has ever been at a human court must very well know that, while it is the easiest thing in the world to throw it into commotion by a violation of etiquette, matters of mere life and death are not at all of a nature to disturb its tranquillity. There, everything is a matter of routine and propriety; and, to judge from experience, nothing is so unseemly as to appear to possess human sympathies. The fact is not very different at Leaphigh, for the monikin sympathies, apparently, are quite as obtuse as those of men; although justice compels me to allow, that in the case of Captain Poke, the appeal was made in behalf of a creature of a different species. It is also a settled principle of Leaphigh jurisprudence, that it would be monstrous for the king to appear in behalf of justice — justice, however, being always administered in his name; although it certainly is not held to be quite so improper for him to interfere in behalf of those who have offended justice.

As a consequence of these nice distinctions, which it requires a very advanced stage of civilization fully to comprehend, both the king and queen received our whole party, when we came back into the presence, exactly as if nothing particular had occurred. Noah wore both head and tail erect, like another; and the lord high admiral of Leaphigh dropped into a familiar conversation with him, on the subject of ballasting ships, in just as friendly a manner as if he were on the best possible terms with the whole royal family. This moral *sang-froid* is not to be ascribed to phlegm, but is, in fact, the result of high mental discipline, which causes the courtier to be utterly destitute of all feeling, except in cases that affect himself.

It was high time, now, that I should be presented. Judge People's Friend, who had witnessed the dilemma of Noah with diplomatic unconcern, very politely renewed the offer of his services in my favor, and I went forward and stood before the throne.

"Sire, allow me to present a very eminent literary character among men, a cunning clerk, by name Goldencalf," said the envoy, bowing to his majesty.

"He is welcome to my court," returned

the king by proxy. "Pray, Mr. People's Friend, is not this one of the human beings who have lately arrived in my dominions, and who have shown so much cleverness in getting Chatterino and his governor through the ice?"

"The very same, please your majesty; and a very arduous service it was, and right cleverly performed."

"This reminds me of a duty. Let my cousin be summoned."

I now began to see a ray of hope, and to feel the truth of the saying which teaches us that justice, though sometimes slow, never fails to arrive at last. I had also, now, and for the first time, a good view of the king's eldest first cousin of the masculine gender, who drew near at the summons; and, while he had the appearance of listening with the most profound attention to the instructions of the king of Leaphigh, was very evidently telling that potentate what he ought to do. The conference ended, his majesty's proxy spoke in a way to be heard by all who had the good fortune to be near the royal person.

"Reasono did a good thing," he said; "really a very good thing, in bringing us these specimens of the human family. But for his cleverness, I might have died without ever dreaming that men were gifted with tails." (Kings never get hold of the truth at the right end.) "I wonder if the queen knew it. Pray, did you know, my Augusta, that men had tails?"

"Our exemption from state affairs gives us females better opportunities than your majesty enjoys, to study these matters," returned his royal consort, by the mouth of her lady of the bed-chamber.

"I daresay I'm very silly—but our cousin here thinks it might be well to do something for these good people, for it may encourage their king himself to visit us some day."

An exclamation of pleasure escaped the ladies; who declared, one and all, it would be delightful to see a real human king—it would be so funny!

"Well, well," added the good-natured monarch, "Heaven knows what may happen, for I have seen stranger things. Really, we ought to do something for these good people; for, although we owe the pleasure of their visit, in a great degree, to the cleverness of Reasono—who, by the way, I'm glad to hear is declared an H. O. A. X.—yet he very handsomely admits, that but for their exertions—none of our seamikins being within reach—it would have been quite impossible to get through the ice. I wish I knew, now, which was the cleverest and the most useful of their party."

Here the queen, always thinking and speaking by proxy, suggested the propriety of leaving the point to Prince Bob.

"It would be no more than is due to his rank; for though they are men, I daresay they have feelings like ourselves."

The question was now submitted to Bob, who sat in judgment on us all, with as much gravity as if accustomed to such duties from infancy. It is said that men soon get to be familiar with elevation, and that, while he who has fallen never fails to look backward, he who has risen invariably limits his vision to the present horizon. Such proved to be the case with the princely Bob.

"This person," observed the jackanapes, pointing to me, "is a very good sort of person, it is true, but he is hardly the sort of person your majesty wants just now. There is the lord high admiral, too—but—" (Bob's but was evenomed by a thousand kicks!)—"but—you wish, sire, to know which of my father's subject's was the most useful in getting the ship to Leaphigh?"

"That is precisely the fact I desire to know."

Bob hereupon pointed to the cook, who, it will be remembered, was present as one of his train-bearers.

"I believe I must say, sire, that this is the man. He fed us all; and without food, and that in considerable quantities, too, nothing could have been done."

The little blackguard was rewarded for his impudence, by exclamations of pleasure from all around him. "It was so clever a distinction"—"it showed so much reflection"—"it was so very pro-

found"—"it proved how much he regarded the base of society"—in short, "it was evident England would be a happy country, when he should be called to the throne!" In the meantime the cook was required to come forth, and kneel before his majesty.

"What is your name?" whispered the lord of the bed-chamber, who now spoke for himself.

"Jack Coppers, your honor."

The lord of the bed-chamber made a communication to his majesty, when the sovereign turned round by proxy, with his back toward Jack, and, giving him the *accolade* with his tail, he bade him rise, as "Sir Jack Coppers."

I was a silent, an admiring, an astounded witness of this act of gross and flagrant injustice. Some one pulled me aside, and then I recognized the voice of Brigadier Downright.

"You think that honors have alighted where they are least due. You think that the saying of your crown prince has more smartness than truth, more malice than honesty. You think that the court has judged on false principles, and acted on an impulse rather than on reason; that the king has consulted his own ease in affecting to do justice; that the courtiers have paid an homage to their master, in affecting to pay an homage to merit; and that nothing in this life is pure or free from the taint of falsehood, selfishness or vanity. Alas! this is too much the case with us monikins, I must allow; though, doubtless, among men you manage a vast deal more cleverly."

CHAPTER XIX.

ABOUT THE HUMILITY OF PROFESSIONAL SAINTS, A SUCCESSION OF TAILS, A BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM, AND OTHER HEAVENLY MATTERS, DIPLOMACY INCLUDED.

PERCEIVING that Brigadier Downright, had an observant mind, and that he was altogether superior to the clannish feeling which is so apt to render a particular species inimical to all others, I asked permission to cultivate his acquaintance; begging, at the same time, that he would kindly favor me with such remarks as might be suggested by his superior wisdom and extensive travels, on any of those customs or opinions that would naturally present themselves in our actual situation. The brigadier took the request in good part, and we began to promenade the rooms in company. As the archbishop of Aggregation, who was to perform the marriage ceremony, was shortly expected, the conversation very naturally turned on the general state of religion in the monikin region.

I was delighted to find that the clerical dogmas of this insulated portion of the world were based on principles absolutely identical with those of all Christendom. The monikins believe that they are a miserable lost set of wretches, who are so debased by nature, so eaten up by envy, uncharitableness, and all other evil passions, that it is quite impossible they can do anything that is good of themselves; that their sole dependence is on the moral interference of the great superior power of creation; and that the very first, and the one needful step of their own, is to cast themselves entirely on this power for support, in a proper spirit of dependence and humility. As collateral to, and consequent on this condition of the mind, they lay the utmost stress on a disregard of all the vanities of life, a proper subjection of the lusts of the flesh, and an abstaining from the pomp and vain glory of ambition, riches, power, and the faculties. In short, the one thing needful was humility—humility—humility. Once thoroughly humbled to a degree that put them above the danger of backsliding, they obtained glimpses of security, and were gradually elevated to the hopes and the condition of the just.

The brigadier was still eloquently discoursing on this interesting topic, when a distant door opened, and a gold stick, or some other sort of stick, announced the right reverend father in God, his grace, the most eminent and most serene prelate, the very puissant and thrice gracious and glorified saint, the primate of all Leaphigh!

The reader will anticipate the eager curiosity with which I advanced to get a glimpse of a saint under a system as sublimated as that of the great monikin family. Civilization having made such progress as to strip all the people, even to the king and queen, entirely of everything in the shape of clothes, I did not well see under what new mantle of simplicity the heads of the Church could take refuge! Perhaps they shaved off all the hair from their bodies in sign of super-eminent self-abasement, leaving themselves naked to the cuticle, that they might prove, by ocular evidence, what a poor ungainly set of wretches they really were, carnally considered; or perhaps they went on all-fours to heaven, in sign of their unfitness to enter into the presence of the pure of mind, in an attitude more erect and confident. Well, these fancies of mine only went to prove how erroneous and false are the conclusions of one whose capacity has not been amplified and concatenated by the ingenuities of a very refined civilization! His grace the most gracious father in God wore a mantle of extraordinary fineness and beauty, the material of which was composed of every tenth hair taken from all the citizens of Leaphigh, who most cheerfully submitted to be shaved, in order that the wants of his most eminent humility might be decently supplied. The mantle, wove from such a warp and such a woof, was necessarily very large; and it really appeared to me that the prelate did not very well know what to do with so much of it, more especially as the contributions included a new robe annually.

I was now desirous of getting a sight of his tail; for, knowing that the Leaphighers take great pride in the length and beauty of that appurtenance, I very naturally supposed that a saint who wore so fine and glorious a robe, by way of humility, must have recourse to some novel expedient to mortify himself on this sensitive subject, at least. I found that the ample proportions of the mantle concealed not only the person, but most of the movements of the archbishop; and it was with many doubts of my success that I led the brigadier behind the episcopal train to reconnoiter. The result disappointed expectation again. Instead of being destitute of a tail, or of concealing that with which nature had supplied him beneath his mantle, the most gracious dignitary wore no less than six *caudæ*, viz., his own, and five others added to it by some subtle process of clerical ingenuity that I shall not attempt to explain; one "bent on to the other," as the captain described them in a subsequent conversation. This extraordinary train was allowed to sweep the floor; the only sign of humility, according to my uninstructed faculties, I could discern about the person and appearance of this illustrious model of clerical self-mortification and humility.

The brigadier, however, was not tardy in setting me right. In the first place, he gave me to understand that the hierarchy of Leaphigh was illustrated by the order of their tails. Thus, a deacon wore one and a half; a curate, if a minister, one and three-quarters; and a rector, two; a dean, two and a half; an archdeacon, three; a bishop, four; the primate of Leaphigh, five; and the primate of *all* Leaphigh, six. The origin of the custom, which was very ancient, and of course very much respected, was imputed to the doctrine of a saint of great celebrity, who had satisfactorily proved that as the tail was the intellectual or the spiritual part of a monikin, the further it was removed from the mass of matter, or the body, the more likely it was to be independent, consecutive, logical, and spiritualized. The idea had succeeded astonishingly at first; but time, which will wear out even a *cauda*, had given birth to schisms in the Church on this interesting subject; one party contending that two more joints ought to be added to the archbishop's embellishment, by way of sustaining the Church, and the other that two joints ought to be incontinently abstracted, in the way of reform.

These explanations were interrupted by the appearance of the bride and bridegroom, at different doors. The charming Chatterissa advanced with a most prepossessing modesty, followed by a glori-

ous train of noble maidens, all keeping their eyes, by a rigid ordinance of hymeneal etiquette, dropped to the level of the queen's feet. On the other hand my Lord Chatterino, attended by that coxcomb Hightail, and others of his kidney, stepped toward the altar with a lofty confidence, which the same etiquette exacted of the bridegroom. The parties were no sooner in their places, than the prelate commenced.

The marriage ceremony, according to the formula of the established Church of Leaphigh, is a very solemn and imposing ceremony. The bridegroom is required to swear that he loves the bride and none but the bride; that he has made his choice solely on account of her merits, uninfluenced even by her beauty; and that he will so far command his inclinations as, on no account, ever to love another a jot. The bride, on her part, calls heaven and earth to witness, that she will do just what the bridegroom shall ask of her; that she will be his bondwoman, his slave, his solace, and his delight; that she is quite certain no other monikin could make her happy, but, on the other hand, she is absolutely sure that any other monikin would be certain to make her miserable. When these pledges, oaths, and asseverations were duly made and recorded, the archbishop caused the happy pair to be wreathed together, by encircling them with his episcopal tail, and they were then pronounced monikin and monikina. I pass over the congratulations, which were quite in rule, to relate a short conversation I held with the brigadier.

"Sir," said I, addressing that person, as soon as the prelate said "amen," "how is this? I have seen a certificate, myself, which showed that there was a just admeasurement of the fitness of this union, on the score of other considerations than those mentioned in the ceremony?"

"That certificate has no connection with this ceremony."

"And yet this ceremony repudiates all the considerations enumerated in the certificate?"

"This ceremony has no connection with that certificate."

"So it would seem; and yet both refer to the same solemn engagement!"

"Why, to tell you the truth, Sir John Goldencalf, we monikins (for in these particulars Leaphigh is Leaplow) have two distinct governing principles in all that we say or do, which may be divided into the theoretical and the practical—moral and immoral would not be inapposite—but, by the first we control all our interests, down as far as facts, when we immediately submit to the latter. There may possibly be something inconsistent in appearance in such an arrangement; but then our most knowing ones say that it works well. No doubt among men you get along without the embarrassment of so much contradiction."

I now advanced to pay my respects to the Countess of Chatterino, who stood supported by the countess-dowager, a lady of great dignity and elegance of demeanor. The moment I appeared the elaborate air of modesty vanished from the charming countenance of the bride in a look of natural pleasure; and, turning to her new mother, she pointed me out as a man! The courteous old dowager gave me a very kind reception, inquiring if I had enough good things to eat, whether I was not much astonished at the multitude of strange sights I beheld in Leaphigh, said I ought to be much obliged to her son for consenting to bring me over, and invited me to come and see her some fine morning.

I bowed my thanks, and then returned to join the brigadier, with a view to seek an introduction to the archbishop. Before I relate the particulars of my interview with that pious prelate, however, it may be well to say that this was the last I ever saw of any of the Chatterino set, as they retired from the presence immediately after the congratulations were ended. I heard, however, previously to leaving the region, which was within a month of the marriage, that the noble pair kept separate establishments, on account of some disagreement about an incompatibility of temper—or a young officer of the guards—I never knew ex-

actly which; but as the estates suited each other so well, there is little doubt that, on the whole, the match was as happy as could be expected.

The archbishop received me with a great deal of professional benevolence, the conversation dropping very naturally into a comparison of the respective religious systems of Great Britain and Leaphigh. He was delighted when he found we had an establishment; and I believe I was indebted to his knowledge of this fact for his treating me more as an equal than he might otherwise have done, considering the difference in species. I was much relieved by this; for, at the commencement of the conversation, he had sounded me a little on doctrine, at which I am far from being expert, never having taken an interest in the church, and I thought he looked frowning at some of my answers; but, when he heard that we really had a national religion, he seemed to think all safe, nor did he once, after, inquire whether we were pagans or Presbyterians. But when I told him we had actually a hierarchy, I thought the good old prelate would have shaken my hand off, and beatified me on the spot!

"We shall meet in heaven some day!" he exclaimed, with holy delight; "men or monikins, it can make no great difference, after all. We shall meet in heaven; and that, too, in the upper mansions!"

The reader will suppose that, an alien, and otherwise unknown, I was much elated by this distinction. To go to heaven in company with the Archbishop of Leaphigh was in itself no small favor; but to be thus noticed by him at court was really enough to upset the philosophy of a stranger. I was sorely afraid, all the while, he would descend to particulars, and that he might have found some essential points of difference to nip his newborn admiration. Had he asked me, for instance, how many *caudæ* our bishops wear, I should have been badgered; for, as near as I can recollect, their personal illustration was of another character. The venerable prelate, however, soon gave me his blessing, pressed me warmly to come to his palace before I sailed, promised to send some tracts by me to England, and then hurried away, as he said, to sign a sentence of excommunication against an unruly presbyter, who had much disturbed the harmony of the Church of late, by an attempt to introduce a schism that he called "piety."

The brigadier and myself discussed the subject of religion at some length, when the illustrious prelate had taken his leave. I was told that the monikin world was pretty nearly equally divided into two parts, the old and the new. The latter had remained uninhabited, until within a few generations, when certain monikins, who were too good to live in the old world, emigrated in a body, and set up for themselves in the new. This, the brigadier admitted, was the Leaplow account of the matter; the inhabitants of the old countries, on the other hand, invariably maintaining that they had peopled the new countries by sending all those of their own communities there who were not fit to stay at home. This little obscurity in the history of the new world, he considers of no great moment, as such trifling discrepancies must always depend on the character of the historian. Leaphigh was by no means the only country in the elder monikin region. There were among others, for instance, Leapup and Leapdown; Leapover and Leapthrough; Leaplong and Leapshort; Leapround and Leapunder. Each of these countries had a religious establishment, though Leaplow, being founded on a new social principle, had none. The brigadier thought, himself, on the whole, that the chief consequences of the two systems were, that the countries which had establishments had a great reputation for possessing religion, and those that had no establishments were well enough off in the article itself, though but indifferently supplied on the score of reputation.

I inquired of the brigadier if he did not think an establishment had the beneficial effect of sustaining truth, by suppressing heresies, limiting and curtailing prurient theological fancies, and otherwise setting limits to innovations. My friend did not absolutely agree with me

in all these particulars; though he very frankly allowed that it had the effect of keeping *two* truths from falling out, by separating them. Thus, Leapup maintained one set of religious dogmas under its establishment, and Leapdown maintained their converse. By keeping these truths apart, no doubt, religious harmony was promoted, and the several ministers of the gospel were enabled to turn all their attention to the sins of the community, instead of allowing it to be diverted to the sins of each other, as was very apt to be the case when there was an antagonist interest to oppose.

Shortly after, the king and queen gave us all our *congés*. Noah and myself got through the crowd without injury to our trains, and we separated in the court of the palace, he to go to his bed and dream of his trial on the morrow, and I to go home with Judge People's Friend and the brigadier, who had invited me to finish the evening with a supper. I was left chatting with the last, while the first went into his closet to indite a dispatch to his government, relating to the events of the evening.

The brigadier was rather caustic in his comments on the incidents of the drawing-room. A republican himself, he certainly did love to give royalty and nobility some occasional rubs; though I must do this worthy, upright monikin the justice to say, he was quite superior to that vulgar hostility which is apt to distinguish many of his caste, and which is founded on a principle as simple as the fact that they cannot be kings and nobles themselves.

While we were chatting very pleasantly, quite at our ease, and in undress, as it were, the brigadier in his bob, and I with my tail laid aside, Judge People's Friend rejoined us, with his dispatch open in his hand. He read aloud what he had written, to my great astonishment, for I had been accustomed to think diplomatic communications sacred. But the judge observed that in this case it was useless to affect secrecy, for two very good reasons; firstly, because he had been obliged to employ a common Leaphigh scrivener to copy what he had written—his government depending on a noble republican economy, which taught it that, if it did get into difficulties by the betrayal of its correspondence, it would still have the money that a clerk would cost to help it out of the embarrassment; and, secondly, because he knew the government itself would print it as soon as it arrived. For his part, he liked to have the publishing of his own works. Under these circumstances, I was even allowed to take a copy of the letter, of which I now furnish a fac-simile.

"SIR:—The undersigned, Envoy-Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary of the Northwestern Leaplow Confederate Union, has the honor to inform the Secretary of State that our interests in this portion of the earth are, in general, on the best possible footing; our national character is getting every day to be more and more elevated, our rights are more and more respected, and our flag is more and more whitening every sea. After this flattering and honorable account of the state of our general concerns, I hasten to communicate the following interesting particulars.

"The treaty between our beloved Northwestern Confederate Union and Leaphigh has been dishonored in every one of its articles; nineteen Leaplow seamen have been forcibly impresed into a Leapthrough vessel of war; the king of Leapup has made an unequivocal demonstration with a very improper part of his person at us; and the king of Leapover has caused seven of our ships to be seized and sold, and the money to be given to his mistress.

"Sir, I congratulate you on this very flattering condition of our foreign relations; which can only be imputed to the glorious constitution of which we are the common servants, and to the just dread which the Leaplow name has so universally inspired in other nations.

"The king has just had a drawing-room, in which I took great care to see that the honor of our beloved country should be faithfully attended to. My

cauda was at least three inches longer than that of the representative of Leapup, the minister most favored by nature in this important particular; and I have the pleasure of adding, that her majesty the queen deigned to give me a very gracious smile. Of the sincerity of that smile there can be no earthly doubt, sir; for, though there is abundant evidence that she did apply certain unseemly words to our beloved country, lately, it would quite exceed the rules of diplomatic courtesy, and be unsustained by proof, were we to call in question her royal sincerity on this public occasion. Indeed, sir, at all the recent drawing-rooms I have received smiles of the most sincere and encouraging character, not only from the king, but from all his ministers, his first-cousin in particular; and I trust they will have the most beneficial effects on the questions at issue between the kingdom of Leaphigh and our beloved country. If they would now only do us justice in the very important affair of the long-standing and long-neglected redress, which we have been seeking in vain at their hands for the last seventy-two years, I should say that our relations were on the best possible footing.

"Sir, I congratulate you on the profound respect with which the Leaplow name is treated in the most distant quarters of the earth, and on the benign influence this fortunate circumstance is likely to exercise on all our important interests.

"I see but little probability of effecting the object of my special mission, but the utmost credit is to be attached to the sincerity of the smiles of the king and queen, and of all the royal family.

"In a late conversation with his majesty, he inquired in the kindest manner after the health of the great sachem [this is the title of the head of the Leaplow government], and observed that our growth and prosperity put all other nations to shame; and that we might, on all occasions, depend on his most profound respect and perpetual friendship. In short, sir, all nations, far and near, desire our alliance, are anxious to open new sources of commerce, and entertain for us the profoundest respect, and the most inviolable esteem. You can tell the great sachem that this feeling is surprisingly augmented under his administration, and that it has at least quadrupled during my mission. If Leaphigh would only respect its treaties, Leapthrough would cease taking our seamen, Leapup have greater deference for the usages of good society, and the king of Leapover would seize no more of our ships to supply his mistress with pocket-money, our foreign relations might be considered to be without spot. As it is, sir, they are far better off than I could have expected, or indeed had ever hoped to see them; and of one thing you may be diplomatically certain, that we are universally respected, and that the Leaplow name is never mentioned without all in company rising and waving their *caudæ*.

("Signed.)

"JUDAS PEOPLE'S FRIEND.

"Hon. ———, etc.

"P. S. [Private.]

"DEAR SIR.—If you publish this dispatch, omit the part where the difficulties are *repeated*. I beg you will see that my name is put in with those of the other patriots, against the periodical rotation of the little wheel, as I shall certainly be obliged to return home soon, having consumed all my means. Indeed, the expense of maintaining a tail, of which our people have no notion, is so very great, that I think none of our missions should exceed a week in duration.

"I would especially advise that the message should dilate on the subject of the high standing of the Leaplow character in foreign nations; for, to be frank with you, facts require that this statement should be made as often as possible."

When this letter was read, the conversation reverted to religion. The brigadier explained that the law of Leaphigh had various peculiarities on this subject that I do not remember to have heard of before. Thus, a monikin could not be born without paying something to the church, a practice which early initiated him into his duties toward that important branch of

the public welfare; and, even when he died, he left a fee behind him, for the parson, as an admonition to those who still existed in the flesh not to forget their obligations. He added that this sacred interest was, in short, so rigidly protected, that, whenever a monikin refused to be plucked for a new clerical or episcopal mantle, there was a method of fleecing him, by the application of red-hot iron rods, which generally signed so much of his skin that he was commonly willing, in the end, to let the hair-proctors pick and choose at pleasure.

I confess I was indignant at this picture, and did not hesitate to stigmatize the practite as barbarous.

"Your indignation is very natural, Sir John, and is just what a stranger would be likely to feel, when he found mercy, and charity, and brotherly love, and virtue, and, above all, humility, made the stalking-horses of pride, selfishness, and avarice. But this is the way with us monikins; no doubt, men manage better."

CHAPTER XX.

A VERY COMMON CASE—OR A GREAT DEAL OF LAW, AND VERY LITTLE JUSTICE—HEADS AND TAILS, WITH THE DANGERS OF EACH.

I WAS early with Noah on the following morning. The poor fellow, when it is remembered that he was about to be tried for a capital offense, in a foreign country, under novel institutions, and before a jury of a different species, manifested a surprising degree of fortitude. Still, the love of life was strong within him, as was apparent by the way in which he opened the discourse.

"Did you observe how the wind was this morning, Sir John, as you came in?" the straightforward sealer inquired with a peculiar interest.

"It is a pleasant gale from the southward."

"Right off shore! If one knew where all them blackguards of rear-admirals and post captains were to be found, I don't think, Sir John, that you would care much about paying those fifty thousand promises!"

"My recognizances? Not in the least, my dear friend, were it not for our honor, it would scarcely be creditable for the *Walrus* to sail, however, leaving an unsettled account of her captain's behind us. What would they say at Stunnin'tun—what would your own consort say of an act so unmanly?"

"Why, at Stunnin'tun we think him the smartest who gets the easiest out of any difficulty; and I don't well see why Miss Poke should know it—or, if she did, why she should think the worse of her husband for saving his life."

"Away with these unworthy thoughts, and brace yourself to meet the trial. We shall, at least, get some insight into the Leaphigh jurisprudence. Come, I see you are already dressed for the occasion; let us be as prompt as duelists."

Noah made up his mind to submit with dignity; although he lingered in the great square, in order to study the clouds, in a way to show he might have settled the whole affair with the foretopsail, had he known where to find his crew. Fortunately for the reputations of all concerned, however, he did not; and, discarding everything like apprehension from his countenance, the sturdy mariner entered the Old Bailey with the tread of a man, and the firmness of innocence. I ought to have said sooner that we had received notice early in the morning, that the proceedings had been taken from before the pages, on appeal, and that a new *venue* had been laid in the High Criminal Court of Leaphigh.

Brigadier Downright met us at the door; where also a dozen grave, greasy-looking counselors gathered about us, in a way to show that they were ready to volunteer in behalf of the stranger, on receiving no more than the customary fee. But I had determined to defend Noah myself (the court consenting), for I had forebodings that our safety would depend more on an appeal to the rights of hospitality than on any legal defense it was in our power to offer. As the brigadier

kindly volunteered to aid me for nothing, I thought proper not to refuse his services, however.

I pass over the appearance of the court, the impaneling of the jury, and the arraignment; for, in matters of mere legal *forms*, there is no great difference between civilized countries, all of them wearing the same semblance of justice. The first indictment, for unhappily there were two, charged Noah with having committed an assault, with malice prepense, on the king's dignity, with "sticks, daggers, muskets, blunderbusses, air-guns, and other unlawful weapons, *more especially with the tongue*, in that he had accused his majesty, face to face, with having a memory, etc., etc." The other indictment, repeating the formula of the first, charged the honest sealer with feloniously accusing her majesty the queen, "in defiance of the law, to the injury of good morals and the peace of society, with having no memory, etc., etc." To both these charges the plea of "not guilty" was entered as fast as possible, in behalf of our client.

I ought to have said before that both Brigadier Downright and myself had applied to be admitted as counsel for the accused, under an ancient law of Leaphigh, as next of kin; I, as a fellow human being, and the brigadier by adoption.

The preliminary forms observed, the attorney-general was about to go into proof, in behalf of the crown, when my brother Downright arose and said that he intended to save the precious time of the court, by admitting the facts, and that it was intended to rest the defense altogether on the law of the case. He presumed the jury were the judges of the law as well as of the facts, according to the rule of Leaplow, and that "he and his brother Goldencalf were quite prepared to show that the law was altogether with us in this affair." The court received the admission, and the facts were submitted to the jury, by consent, as proven; although the chief-justice took occasion to remark, Longbeard dissenting, that, while the jury were certainly judges of the law, in one sense, yet there was another sense in which they were not judges of the law. The dissent of Baron Longbeard went to maintain that while the jury were the judges of the law in the "another sense" mentioned, they were not judges of the law in the "one sense" named. This difficulty disposed of, Mr. Attorney-General arose and opened for the crown.

I soon found that we had one of a very comprehensive and philosophical turn of mind against us, in the advocate of the other side. He commenced his argument by a vigorous and lucid sketch of the condition of the world previously to the subdivisions of its different inhabitants into nations, and tribes, and clans, while in the human or chrysalis condition. From this statement, he deduced the regular gradations by which men became separated into communities, and subjected to the laws of civilization, or what is called society. Having proceeded thus far, he touched lightly on the different phases that the institutions of men had presented, and descended gradually and consecutively to the fundamental principles of the social compact, as they were known to exist among monikins. After a few general observations that properly belonged to the subject, he came to speak of those portions of the elementary principles of society that are connected with the rights of the sovereign. These he divided into the rights of the king's prerogative, the rights of the king's person, and the rights of the king's conscience. Here he again generalized a little, and in a very happy manner; so well, indeed, as to leave all his hearers in doubt as to what he would next be at; when by a fierce logical swoop, he descended suddenly on the latter of the king's rights, as the one that was most connected with the subject.

He triumphantly showed that the branch of the royal immunities that was chiefly affected by the prisoner at the bar, was very nearly connected with the rights of the king's conscience. "The attributes of royalty," observed the sagacious advocate, "are not to be estimated in the same manner as the attributes of the subject. In the sacred person of the king are centered many, if not most, of the interesting privileges of

monikinism. That royal personage, in a political sense, can do no wrong; official infallibility is the consequence. Such a being has no occasion for the ordinary faculties of the monikin condition. Of what use, for instance, is a judgment, or a conscience, to a functionary who can do no wrong. The law, in order to relieve one on whose shoulders was imposed the burden of the state, had consequently placed the latter especially in the keeping of another. His majesty's first cousin is the keeper of his conscience, as is known throughout the realm of Leaphigh. A memory is the faculty of the least account to a personage who has no conscience; and, while it is not contended that the sovereign is relieved from the possession of his memory by any positive statute law, or direct constitutional provision, it follows by unavoidable implication, and by all legitimate construction, that, having no occasion to possess such a faculty, it is the legal presumption he is altogether without it.

"That simplicity, ludicity and distinctness, my lords," continued Mr. Attorney-General, "which are necessary to every well-ordered mind, would be impaired in the case of his majesty, were his intellectual faculties unnecessarily crowded in this useless manner, and the state would be the sufferer. My lords, the king reigns, but he does not govern. This is a fundamental principle of the constitution; nay, it is more—it is the palladium of our liberties. My lords, it is an easy matter to reign in Leaphigh. It requires no more than the rights of primogeniture, sufficient discretion to understand the distinction between reigning and governing, and a political moderation that is unlikely to derange the balance of the State. But it is quite a different thing to govern. His majesty is required to govern nothing, the slightest interests just mentioned excepted; no, not even himself. The case is far otherwise with his first cousin. This high functionary is charged with the important trust of governing. It had been found, in the early ages of the monarchy, that one conscience, or indeed one set of faculties generally, scarcely sufficed for him whose duty it was both to reign and to govern. We all know, my lords, how insufficient for our personal objects are our own private faculties; how difficult we find it to restrain even ourselves, assisted merely by our own judgments, consciences and memories; and in this fact do we perceive the great importance of investing him who governs others, with an additional set of these grave faculties. Under a due impression of the exigency of such a state of things, the common law —not statute law, my lords, which is apt to be tainted with the imperfections of monikin reason in its isolated or individual state, usually bearing the impress of the single *cauda* from which it emanated; but the common law, the known receptacle of all the common sense of the nation—in such a state of things then, has the common law long since decreed that his majesty's first cousin should be the keeper of his majesty's conscience, and, by necessary legal implication, endowed with his majesty's judgment, his majesty's reason, and finally, his majesty's *memory*.

"My lords, this is the legal presumption. It would, in addition, be easy for me to show, in a thousand facts, that not only the sovereign of Leaphigh, but most other sovereigns, are and ever have been, destitute of the faculty of a memory. It might be said to be incompatible with the royal condition to be possessed of this obtrusive faculty. Were a prince endowed with a memory, he might lose sight of his high estate, in the recollection that he was born, and that he is destined, like another, to die; he might be troubled with visions of the past; nay, the consciousness of his very dignity might be unsettled and weakened by a vivid view of the origin of his royal race. Promises, obligations, attachments, duties, principles, and even debts, might interfere with the due discharge of his sacred trusts, were the sovereign invested with a memory; and it has, therefore, been decided, from time immemorial, that his majesty is utterly without the properties of reason, judgment, and memory, as a legitimate inference from his being destitute of a conscience."

Mr. Attorney-General now directed the attention of the court and jury to a statute of the third of Firstborn sixth, by which it was enacted that any person attributing to his majesty the possession of any faculty, with felonious intent, that might endanger the tranquillity of the state, should suffer decaudization, without benefit of clergy. Here he rested the case on behalf of the crown.

There was a solemn pause, after the speaker had resumed his seat. His argument, logic, and, above all, his good sense and undeniable law, made a very sensible impression; and I had occasion to observe that Noah began to chew tobacco ravenously. After a decent interval, however, Brigadier Downright—who, it would seem, in spite of his military appellation, was neither more nor less than a practicing attorney and counselor in the city of Bivouac, the commercial capital of the republic of Leaplow—arose, and claimed right to be heard in reply. The court now took it into its head to start the objection, for the first time, that the advocate had not been duly qualified to plead, or to argue, at their bar. My brother Downright instantly referred their lordships to the law of adoption, and to that provision of the criminal code which permitted the accused to be heard by his next of kin.

"Prisoner at the bar," said the chief-justice, "you hear the statement of counsel. Is it your desire to commit the management of your defense to your next of kin?"

"To anybody, your honors, if the court please," returned Noah, furiously masticating his beloved weed; "to anybody who will do it well, my honorables, and do it cheap."

"And do you adopt, under the provisions of the statute in such cases made and provided, Aaron Downright as one of your next of kin, and if so, in what capacity?"

"I do—I do—my lords and your honors—I do, body and soul—if you please, I adopt the brigadier as my father; and my fellow human being and tried friend, Sir John Goldencalf, here, I adopt him as my mother."

The court now formally assenting, the facts were entered of record, and my brother Downright was requested to proceed with the defense.

The counsel for the prisoner, like *Dandin*, in Racine's comedy of "Les Plaideurs," was disposed to pass over the deluge, and to plunge instantly into the core of his subject. He commenced with a review of the royal prerogatives, and with a definition of the words "to reign." Referring to the dictionary of the academy, he showed triumphantly, that to reign was no other than to "govern as a sovereign;" while to govern, in the familiar signification, was no more than to govern in the name of a prince, or as a deputy. Having successfully established this point, he laid down the position, that the greater might contain the less, but that the less could not possibly contain the greater. That the right to reign, or to govern, in the generic signification of the term, must include all the lawful attributes of him who only governed, in the secondary signification; and that, consequently, the king not only reigned, but governed. He then proceeded to show that a memory was indispensable to him who governed, since without one he could neither recollect the laws, make a suitable disposition of rewards and punishments, nor, in fact, do any other intelligent or necessary act. Again, it was contended that by the law of the land the king's conscience was in the keeping of his first cousin; now, in order that the king's conscience should be in such keeping, it is clear that he must *have* a conscience, since a nonentity could not be in keeping, or even put in commission; and, having a conscience, it followed, *ex necessitate rie*, that he must have the attributes of a conscience, of which memory formed one of the most essential features. Conscience was defined to be "the faculty by which we judge of the goodness or wickedness of our own actions." (See "Johnson's Dictionary," page 163, letter C. London edition. Rivington, publisher.) Now in what manner can one judge of the goodness or wickedness of his acts, or of those of any other person, if he

knows nothing about them?—and how can he know anything of the past, unless endowed with the faculty of a memory?

Again; it was a political corollary from the institutions of Leaphigh, that the king could do no wrong—

"I beg your pardon, my brother Downright," interrupted the chief justice, "it is not a corollary, but a proposition—and one, too, that is held to be demonstrated. It is the paramount law of the land."

"I thank you, my lord," continued the brigadier, "as your lordship's high authority makes my case so much the stronger. It is, then, settled law, gentlemonikins of the jury, that the sovereign of the realm can do no wrong. It is also settled law—their lordships will correct me, if I misstate—it is also settled law that the sovereign is the fountain of honor, that he can make war and peace, that he administers justice, sees the laws executed—"

"I beg your pardon, again, brother Downright," interrupted the chief-justice. "This is not the law, but the prerogative. It is the king's prerogative to be and do all this, but it is very far from being law."

"Am I to understand, my lord, that the court makes a distinction between that which is prerogative, and that which is law?"

"Beyond a doubt, brother Downright! If all that is prerogative was also law, we could not get on an hour."

"Prerogative, if your lordship pleases, or *prerogativa*, is defined to be 'an exclusive or peculiar privilege.' [Johnson. Letter P, page 139, fifth clause from bottom. Edition as aforesaid. Speaking slow, in order to enable Baron Longbeard to make his notes.] Now an *exclusive privilege*, I humbly urge, must supersede all enactments, and—"

"Not at all, sir—not at all, sir," put in my lord chief-justice, dogmatically—looking out of the window at the clouds, in a way to show that his mind was quite made up. "Not at all, good sir. The king has his prerogatives, beyond a question; and they are sacred; a part of the constitution. They are, moreover, exclusive and peculiar, as stated by Johnson; but their exclusion and peculiarity are not to be construed in the vulgar acceptations. In treating of the vast interests of a state, the mind must take a wide range; and I hold, brother Longbeard, there is no principle more settled than the fact that *prerogativa* is one thing, and *lex*, or the law, another." The baron bowed assent. "By exclusion, in this case, is meant that the prerogative touches only his majesty. The prerogative is exclusively his property, and he may do what he pleases with it; but the law is made for the nation, and is altogether a different matter. Again; by peculiar, is clearly meant peculiarity, or that this case is analogous to no other, and must be reasoned on by the aid of a peculiar logic. No, sir—the king can make peace and war, it is true, under his prerogative; but then his conscience is hard and fast in the keeping of another, who alone can perform all legal acts."

"But, my lord, justice, though administered by others, is still administered in the king's name."

"No doubt, in his name:—this is a part of the *peculiar* privilege. War is made in his majesty's name, too—so is peace. What is war? It is the personal conflicts between bodies of men of different nations. Does his majesty engage in these conflicts? Certainly not. The war is maintained by taxes—does his majesty pay them? No. Thus we see that while the war is constitutionally the king's it is practically the people's. It follows, as a corollary—since you quote corollaries, brother Downright—that there are *two* wars—or the war of the prerogative, and the war of the fact. Now the prerogative is a constitutional principle—a very sacred one, certainly:—but a fact is a thing that comes home to every monikin's fireside; and therefore the courts have decided, ever since the reign of Timid II., or ever since they dared, that the prerogative was one thing, and the law another."

My brother Downright seemed a good deal perplexed by the distinctions of the court, and he concluded much sooner than he otherwise would have done; summing up the whole of his arguments, by showing or attempting to show, that if the

king had even these *peculiar* privileges, and nothing else, he must be supposed to have a memory.

The court now called upon the attorney-general to reply; but that person appeared to think his case strong enough as it was; and the matter, by agreement, was submitted to the jury, after a short charge from the bench.

"You are not to suffer your intellects to be confused, gentlemonikins, by the argument of the prisoner's counsel," concluded the chief justice. "He has done his duty, and it remains for you to be equally conscientious. You are, in this case, the judges of the law and the fact; but it is a part of my functions to inform you what they both are. By the law, the king is supposed to have no faculties. The inference drawn by counsel, that, not being capable of erring, the king must have the highest possible moral attributes, and consequently a memory, is unsound. The constitution says his majesty *can* do no wrong. This inability may proceed from a variety of causes. If he can do *nothing*, for instance, he can do no wrong. The constitution does not say that the sovereign *will* do no wrong—but, that he *can* do no wrong. Now, gentlemonikins, when a thing *cannot* be done, it becomes impossible; and it is, of course, beyond the reach of argument. It is of no moment whether a person has a memory, if he cannot use it, and, in such a case, the legal presumption is, that he is without a memory; for, otherwise, nature, who is ever wise and beneficent, would be throwing away her gifts.

"Gentlemonikins, I have already said you are the judges, in this case, of both the law and the fact. The fate of the prisoner is in your hands. God forbid it should be, in any manner, influenced by me; but this is an offense against the king's dignity, and the security of the realm; the law is against the prisoner, the facts are all against the prisoner, and I doubt not that your verdict will be the spontaneous decision of your own excellent judgments, and of such a nature as will prevent the necessity of our ordering a new trial."

The jurors put their tails together, and in less than a minute their foremonikin rendered a verdict of guilty. Noah sighed, and took a fresh supply of tobacco.

The case of the queen was immediately opened by her majesty's attorney-general, the prisoner having been previously arraigned, and a plea entered of "not guilty."

The queen's advocate made a bitter attack on the *animus* of the unfortunate prisoner. He described her majesty as a paragon of excellences; as a depositary of all the monikina virtues, and the model of her sex. "If she, who was so justly celebrated for the gifts of charity, meekness, religion, justice, and submission to feminine duties, had no memory, he asked leave to demand, in the name of God, who had! Without a memory, in what manner was this illustrious personage to recall her duties to her royal consort, her duties to her royal offspring, her duties to her royal self? Memory was peculiarly a royal attribute; and without its possession no one could properly be deemed of high and ancient lineage. Memory referred to the past, and the consideration due to royalty was scarcely ever a present consideration, but a consideration connected with the past. We venerated the past. Time was divided into the past, present and future. The past was invariably a monarchical interest—the present was claimed by republicans—the future belonged to fate. If it were decided that the queen had no memory, we should strike a blow at royalty. It was by memory, as connected with the public archives, that the king derived his title to his throne; it was to memory, which recalled the deed of his ancestors, that he became entitled to our most profound respect."

In this manner did the queen's attorney-general speak for about an hour, when he gave way to the counsel for the prisoner. But, to my great surprise, for I knew that this accusation was much the gravest of the two, since the head of Noah would be the price of conviction, my brother Downright, instead of making a very ingenious reply, as I had fully anticipated, merely said a few words, in which he expressed

so firm a confidence in the acquittal of his client, as to appear to think a further defense altogether unnecessary. He had no sooner seated himself, than I expressed a strong dissatisfaction with his course, and avowed an intention to make an effort in behalf of my poor friend, myself.

"Keep silence, Sir John," whispered my brother Downright; "the advocate who makes many unsuccessful applications gets to be disrespected. I charge myself with the care of the lord high admiral's interests; at the proper time they shall be duly attended to."

Having the profoundest respect for the brigadier's legal attainments, and no great confidence in my own, I was fain to submit. In the meantime, the business of the court proceeded; and the jury, having received a short charge from the bench, which was quite as impartial as a positive injunction to convict could very well be, again rendered the verdict of "guilty."

In Leaphigh, although it is deemed indecent to wear clothes, it is also esteemed exceedingly decorous for certain high functionaries to adorn their persons with suitable badges of their official rank. We have already had an account of the hierarchy of tails, and a general description of the mantle composed of tenth-hairs; but I had forgotten to say that both my Lord Chief-Justice and Baron Longbeard had tail-cases made of the skins of deceased monikins, which gave the appearance of greater development to their intellectual organs, and most probably had some influence in the way of coddling their brains, which required great care and attention on account of incessant use. They now drew over these tail-cases a sort of box-coat of a very bloodthirsty color, which, we were given to understand, was a sign that they were in earnest, and about to pronounce sentence; justice in Leaphigh being of singularly bloodthirsty habits.

"Prisoner at the bar," the chief-justice began, in a voice of reproof, "you have heard the decision of your peers. You have been arraigned and tried on the heinous charge of having accused the sovereign of this realm of being in possession of the faculty called 'a memory,' thereby endangering the peace of society, unsettling the social relations, and setting a dangerous example of insubordination and of contempt of the laws. Of this crime, after a singularly patient and impartial hearing, you have been found guilty. The law allows the court no discretion in the case. It is my duty to pass sentence forthwith; and I now solemnly ask you, if you have anything to say why sentence of decaudization should not be pronounced against you." Here the chief-justice took just time enough to gape, and then proceeded—"You are right in throwing yourself altogether on the mercy of the court, which better knows what is fittest for you, than you can possibly know for yourself. You will be taken, Noah Poke, or No. 1, sea-water color, forthwith, to the center of the public square, between the hours of sunrise and sunset of this day, where your *cauda* will be cut off; and after it has been divided into four parts, a part will be exposed toward each of the cardinal points of the compass; and the brush thereof being consumed by fire, the ashes will be thrown into your face, and this without benefit of clergy. And may the Lord have mercy on your soul!"

"Noah Poke, or No. 1, sea-water color," put in Baron Longbeard, without giving the culprit breathing time, "you have been indicted, tried, and found guilty of the enormous crime of charging the queen-consort of this realm of being wanting in the ordinary, important, and every-day faculty of a memory. Have you anything to say why sentence should not be forthwith passed against you? No; I am sure you are very right in throwing yourself altogether on the mercy of the court, which is quite disposed to show you all that is in its power, which happens, in this case, to be none at all. I need not dwell on the gravity of your offense. If the law should allow that the queen has no memory, other females might put in claims to the same privilege, and society would become a chaos. Marriage vows, duties, affections, and all our nearest and dearest interests would be unhinged, and

this pleasant state of being would degenerate into a moral, or rather an immoral pandemonium. Keeping in view these all-important considerations, and more especially the imperativeness of the law, which does not admit of discretion, the court sentences you to be carried hence, without delay, to the center of the great square, where your head will be severed from your body by the public executioner, without benefit of clergy; after which your remains will be consigned to the public hospitals for the purposes of dissection."

The words were scarcely out of Baron Longbeard's mouth, before both the attorneys-general started up, to move the court in behalf of the separate dignities of their respective principals. Mr. Attorney-General of the crown prayed the court so far to amend its sentence, as to give precedency to the punishment on account of the offense against the king; and Mr. Attorney-General for the queen, to pray the court that it would not be so far forgetful of her majesty's rights and dignity, as to establish a precedent so destructive of both. I caught a glimpse of hope glancing about the eyes of my brother Downright, who, waiting just long enough to let the two advocates warm themselves over these points of law, arose and moved the court for a stay of execution, on the plea that neither sentence was legal; that delivered by my lord chief-justice containing a contradiction, inasmuch as it ordered the decaudization to take place between *the hours of sunrise and sunset, forthwith;* and that delivered by Baron Longbeard, on account of its ordering the body to be given up to dissection, contrary to the law, which merely made that provision in the case of condemned *monikins,* the prisoner at the bar being entirely of another species.

The court deemed all these objections serious, but decided on its own incompetency to take cognizance of them. It was a question for the twelve judges, who were now on the point of assembling, and to whom they referred the whole affair on appeal. In the meantime, justice could not be stayed. The prisoner must be carried out into the square, and matters must proceed; but, should either of the points be finally determined in his favor, he could have the benefit of it, so far as circumstances would then allow. Hereupon, the court rose, and the judges, counsel, and clerks repaired in a body to the hall of the twelve judges.

CHAPTER XXI.

BETTER AND BETTER—MORE LAW AND MORE JUSTICE—TAILS AND HEADS; THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING EACH IN ITS PROPER PLACE.

NOAH was incontinently transferred to the place of execution, where I promised to meet him in time to receive his parting sigh, curiosity inducing me first to learn the issue on the appeal. The brigadier told me in confidence, as we went to the other hall, that the affair was now getting to be one of great interest; that hitherto it had been mere boy's play, but it would in future require counsel of great reading and research to handle the arguments, and that he flattered himself there was a good occasion likely to present itself for him to show what monikin reason really was.

The whole of the twelve wore tail-cases, and altogether they presented a formidable array of intellectual development. As the cause of Noah was admitted to be one of more than common urgency, after hearing only three or four other applications on behalf of the crown, whose rights always have precedence on such occasions, the attorney-general of the king was desired to open his case.

The learned counsel spoke, in anticipation, to the objections of both his adversaries, beginning with those of my brother Downright. *Forthwith,* he contended, might be at any period of the twenty-four hours, according to the actual time of using the term. Thus, *forthwith* of a morning, would mean in the morning; *forthwith* at noon, would mean at noon; and so on to the close of the legal day. Moreover, in a legal signification, *forth-*

with must mean between sunrise and sunset, the statute commanding that all executions shall take place by the light of the sun, and consequently the two terms ratified and confirmed each other, instead of conveying a contradiction, or of neutralizing each other, as would most probably be contended by the opposite counsel.

To all this my brother Downright, as is usual on such occasions, objected pretty much the converse. He maintained that *all* light proceeded from the sun; and that the statute, therefore, could only mean that there should be no executions during eclipses, a period when the whole monikin race ought to be occupied in adoration. *Forthwith*, moreover, did not necessarily mean *forthwith*, for forthwith meant immediately; and "between sunrise and sunset" meant between sunrise and sunset; which might be immediately, or might not.

On this point the twelve judges decided, firstly, that *forthwith* did not mean *forthwith;* secondly, that forthwith did mean forthwith; thirdly, that forthwith had two legal meanings; fourthly, that it was illegal to apply one of these legal meanings to a wrong legal purpose; and fifthly, that the objection was of no avail, as respected the case of No. 1, sea-water color. Ordered, therefore, that the criminal lose his tail *forthwith*.

The objection to the other sentence met with no better fate. Men and monikins did not differ more than some men differed from other men, or some monikins differed from other monikins. Ordered, that the sentence be confirmed with costs. I thought this decision the soundest of the two; for I had often had occasion to observe, that there were very startling points of resemblance between monkeys and our own species.

The contest now commenced between the two attorneys-general in earnest; and, as the point at issue was a question of mere rank, it excited a lively—I may say an engrossing—interest in all the hearers. It was settled, however, after a vigorous discussion, in favor of the king, whose royal dignity the twelve judges were unanimously of opinion was entitled to precedency over that of the queen. To my great surprise, my brother Downright volunteered an argument on this intricate point, and making an exceedingly clever speech in favor of the king's dignity, as was admitted by every one who heard it. It rested chiefly on the point that the ashes of the tail were, by the sentence, to be thrown into the culprit's face. It is true this might be done physically after decapitation, but it could not be done morally. This part of the punishment was designed for a moral effect; and to produce that effect, consciousness and shame were both necessary. Therefore, the moral act of throwing the ashes into the face of the criminal could only be done while he was living, and capable of being ashamed.

Meditation, chief-justice, delivered the opinion of the bench. It contained the usual amount of legal ingenuity and logic, was esteemed as very eloquent in that part which touched on the sacred and inviolable character of the royal prerogatives (*prerogativæ* as he termed them), and was so lucid in pointing out the general inferiority of the queen-consort, that I felt happy her majesty was not present to hear herself and sex undervalued. As might have been expected, it allowed great weight to the distinction taken by the brigadier. The decision was in the following words, viz: "Rex et Regina versus No. 1, sea-water color, ordered, that the officers of justice shall proceed forthwith to decaudizate the defendant before they decapitate him; provided he has not been forthwith decapitated before he can be decaudizated."

The moment this mandamus was put into the hands of the proper officer, Brigadier Downright caught me by the knee, and led me out of the hall of justice, as if both our lives depended on our expedition. I was about to reproach him for having volunteered to aid the king's attorney-general, when, seizing me by the root of the tail, for the want of a buttonhole, he said, with evident satisfaction:

"Affairs go on swimmingly, my dear Sir John! I do not remember to have been employed, for some years, in a more

interesting litigation. Now this cause, which, no doubt, you think is drawing to a close, has just reached its pivot, or turning-point; and I see every prospect of extricating our client with great credit to myself."

"How! my brother Downright?" I interrupted; "the accused is finally sentenced, if not actually executed!"

"Not so fast, my good Sir John—not so fast, by any means. Nothing is final in law, while there is a farthing to meet the costs, or the criminal can yet gasp. I hold our case to be in an excellent way; much better than I have deemed it at any time since the accused was arraigned."

Surprise left me no other power than that which was necessary to demand an explanation.

"All depends on the single fact, dear sir," continued my brother Downright, "whether the head is still on the body of the accused or not. Do you proceed, as fast as possible, to the place of execution; and, should our client still have a head, keep up his spirits by a proper religious discourse, always preparing him for the worst, for this is no more than wisdom; but the instant his tail is separated from his body, run hither as fast as you can, to apprise me of the fact. I ask but two things of you—speed in coming with the news, and perfect certainty that the tail is not yet attached to the rest of the frame, by even a hair. A hair often turns the scales of justice!"

"The case seems desperate—would it not be as well for me to run down to the palace, at once; demand an audience of their majesties, throw myself on my knees before the royal pair, and implore a pardon?"

"Your project is impracticable, for three sufficient reasons; firstly, there is not time; secondly, you would not be admitted without special appointment; thirdly, there is neither a king nor a queen!"

"No king in Leaphigh!"

"I have said it."

"Explain yourself, brother Downright, or I shall be obliged to refute what you say by the evidence of my own senses."

"Your senses will prove to be false witnesses then. Formerly there *was* a king in Leaphigh, and one who governed as well as reigned. But the nobles and grandees of the country, deeming it indecent to trouble his majesty with affairs of state any longer, took upon themselves all the trouble of governing, leaving to the sovereign the whole duty of reigning. This was done in a way to save his feelings, under the pretense of setting up a barrier to the physical force and abuses of the mass. After a time, it was found inconvenient and expensive to feed and otherwise support the royal family, and all its members were privately shipped to a distant region, which had not yet got to be so far advanced in civilization as to know how to keep up a monarchy without a monarch."

"And does Leaphigh succeed in effecting this prodigy?"

"Wonderfully well. By means of decapitations and decaudizations enough, even greater exploits may be performed."

"But am I to understand literally, brother Downright, there is no such thing as a monarch in this country?"

"Literally."

"And the presentations?"

"Are like these trials, to maintain the monarchy."

"And the crimson curtains?"

"Conceal empty seats."

"Why not, then, dispense with so much costly representation?"

"In what way could the grandees cry out that the throne is in danger, if there were no throne? It is one thing to have no monarch, and another to have no throne. But all this time our client is in great jeopardy. Hasten, therefore, and be particular to act as I have just instructed you."

I stopped to hear no more, but in a minute was flying toward the center of the square. It was easy enough to perceive the tail of my friend waving over the crowd; but grief and apprehension had already rendered his countenance so rueful that, at the first glance, I did not recognize his head. He was, however, still in the body; for, luckily for himself, and

more especially for the success of his principal counsel, the gravity of his crimes had rendered unusual preparations necessary for the execution. As the mandate of the court had not yet arrived—justice being as prompt in Leaphigh as her ministers are dilatory—two blocks were prepared, and the culpit was about to get down on his hands and knees between them, as I forced my way through the crowd to his side.

"Ah! Sir John, this is an awful predicament!" exclaimed the rebuked Noah; "a ra'ally awful situation for a human Christian to have his enemies lying athwart both bows and starn!"

"While there is life there is hope; but it is always best to be prepared for the worst—he who is thus prepared never can meet with a disagreeable surprise. Messrs. Executioners"—for there were two, that of the king, and that of the queen, or one at each end of the unhappy criminal—"Messrs. Executioners, I pray you to give the culpit a moment to arrange his thoughts, and to communicate his last requests in behalf of his distant family and friends!"

To this reasonable petition neither of the high functionaries of the law made any objection, although both insisted if they did not forthwith bring the culprit to the last stages of preparation, they might lose their places. They did not see, however, but a man might pause for a moment on the brink of the grave. It would seem that there had been a little misunderstanding between the executioners themselves on the point of precedency which had been one cause of the delay, and which had been disposed of by an arrangement that both should operate at the same instant. Noah was now brought down to his hands and knees, "moored head and starn," as that unfeeling blackguard Bob, who was in the crowd, expressed it, between the two blocks, his neck lying on one and his tail on the other. While in this edifying attitude, I was permitted to address him.

"It may be well to bethink you of your soul, my dear captain," I said; "for, to speak truth, those axes have a very prompt and sanguinary appearance."

"I know it, Sir John, I know it; and, not to mislead you, I will own that I have been repenting with all my might, ever since that first vardict. That affair of the lord high admiral, in particular, has given me a good deal of consarn; and I now humbly ask your pardon for being led away by such a miserable deception, which is all owing to that riptyle, Dr. Reasono, who, I hope, will yet meet with his desarts. I forgive everybody, and hope everybody will forgive me. As for Miss Poke, it will be a hard case; for she is altogether past expecting another consort, and she must be satisfied to be a relic the rest of her days."

"Repentance, repentance, my dear Noah—repentance is the one thing needful for a man in your extremity."

"I do—I do, Sir John, body and soul—I repent, from the bottom of my heart, ever having come on this v'y'ge—nay, I don't know but I repent ever having come outside of Montauk Point. I might, at this moment, have been a schoolmaster or a tavern keeper in Stunnin'tun; and they are both good wholesome berths, particularly the last. Lord love you! Sir John, if repentance would do any good, I should be pardoned on the spot."

Here Noah caught a glimpse of Bob grinning in the crowd, and he asked of the executioners, as a last favor, that they would have the boy brought near, that he might take an affectionate leave of him. This reasonable request was complied with, despite of poor Bob's struggles; and the youngster had quite as good reasons for hearty repentance as the culprit himself. Just at this trying moment, the mandate for the order of the punishments arrived, and the officials seriously declared that the condemned must prepare to meet his fate.

The unflinching manner in which Captain Poke submitted to the mortal process of decaudization extracted plaudits from, and awakened sympathy in, every monikin present. Having satisfied myself that the tail was actually separated from the body, I ran, as fast as legs could carry me, toward the hall of the twelve judges. My brother Downright, who was impa-

tiently expecting my appearance, instantly arose and moved the bench to issue a mandamus for a stay of execution in the case of "Regina versus Noah Poke or No. 1, sea-water color. By the statute of the 2d of Longevity and Flirtilla, it was enacted, my lords," put in the brigadier, "that in no case shall a convicted felon suffer loss of life, or limb, while it can be established that he is *non compos mentis*. This is also a rule, my lords, of common law—but being common sense and common monikinity, it has been thought prudent to enforce it by an especial enactment. I presume Mr. Attorney-General for the queen will scarcely dispute the law of the case——"

"Not at all, my lords—though I have some doubts as to the fact. The fact remains to be established," answered the other, taking snuff.

"The fact is certain, and will not admit of cavil. In the case of Rex versus Noah Poke, the court ordered the punishment of decaudization to take precedence of that of decapitation, in the case of Regina versus the same. Process had been issued from the bench to that effect; the culprit has, in consequence, lost his *cauda*, and with it his reason; a creature without reason has always been held to be *non compos mentis*, and by the law of the land is not liable to the punishment of life or limb."

"Your law is plausible, my brother Downright," observed my Lord Chief-Justice, "but it remains for the bench to be put in possession of the facts. At the next term, you will perhaps be better prepared—"

"I pray you, my lord, to remember that this is a case which will not admit of three months' delay."

"We can decide the principle a year hence, as well as to-day; and we have now sat longer *in banco*," looking at his watch, "than is either usual, agreeable, or expedient."

"But, my lords, the proof is at hand. Here is a witness to establish that the *cauda* of Noah Poke, the defendant of record, has actually been separated from his body—"

"Nay—nay—my brother Downright, a barrister of your experience must know that the twelve can only take evidence on affidavit. If you had an affidavit prepared, we might possibly find time to hear it, before we adjourn; as it is, the affair must lie over to another sitting."

I was now in a cold sweat, for I could distinctly scent the peculiar odor of the burning tail; the ashes of which being fairly thrown into Noah's face, there remained no further obstacle to the process of decapitation—the sentence, it will be remembered, having kept his countenance on his shoulders expressly for that object. My brother Downright, however, was not a lawyer to be defeated by so simple a stumbling-block. Seizing a paper that was already written over in a good legal hand, which happened to be lying before him, he read it, without pause or hesitation, in the following manner:

"Regina *versus* Noah Poke.

Kingdom of Leaphigh, Season of Nuts, this 4th day of the Moon. Personally appeared before me, Meditation, Lord Chief-Justice of the Court of King's Bench, John Goldencalf, Baronet, of the kingdom of Great Britain, who, being duly sworn, doth depose and say, viz., that he, the said deponent, was present at, and did witness, the decaudization of the defendant in this suit, and that the tail of the said Noah Poke, or No. 1, sea-water color, hath been truly and physically separated from his body. And further, this deponent sayeth not. Signature, etc."

Having read, in the most fluent manner, the foregoing affidavit (which existed only in his own brain), my brother Downright desired the court to take my deposition to its truth.

"John Goldencalf, Baronet," said the chief-justice, "you have heard what has just been read; do you swear to its truth?"

"I do."

Here the affidavit was signed by both my lord chief-justice and myself, and it was duly put on file. I afterward learned that the paper used by my brother Down-

right on this memorable occasion was no other than the notes which the chief-justice himself had taken on one of the arguments in the case in question, and that, seeing the names and title of the cause, beside finding it no easy matter to read his own writing, that high officer of the crown had, very naturally, supposed that all was right. As to the rest of the bench, they were in too great a hurry to go to dinner to stop and read affidavits, and the case was instantly disposed of, by the following decision:

"Regina *versus* Noah Poke, etc. Ordered, that the culprit be considered *non compos mentis*, and that he be discharged, on finding security to keep the peace for the remainder of his natural life."

An officer was instantly dispatched to the great square with this reprieve, and the court rose. I delayed a little in order to enter into the necessary recognizances in behalf of Noah, taking up, at the same time the bonds given the previous night, for his appearance to answer to the indictments. These forms being duly complied with, my brother Downright and myself repaired to the place of execution, in order to congratulate our client—the former justly elated with his success, which he assured me was not a little to the credit of his own education.

We found Noah surprisingly relieved by his liberation from the hands of the Philistines; nor was he at all backward in expressing his satisfaction at the unexpected turn things had taken. According to his account of the matter, he did not set a higher value on his head than another, still, it was convenient to have one; had it been necessary to part with it, he made no doubt he should have submitted to do so like a man, referring to the fortitude which which he had borne the amputation of his *cauda*, as a proof of his resolution; for his part, he should take very good care how he accused any one with having a memory, or anything else, again, and he now saw the excellence of those wise provisions of the law, which cut up a criminal in order to prevent the repetition of his offense; he did not intend to stay much longer on shore, believeing he should be less in the way of temptation on board the *Walrus* than among the monikins; and, as for his own people, he was sure of soon catching them on board again, for they had now been off their pork twenty-four hours, and nuts were but poor grub for foremast hands, after all: philosophers might say what they pleased about governments, but, in his opinion, the only ra'al tyrant on 'arth was the belly; he did not remember ever to have had a struggle with his belly—and he had a thousand—that the belly didn't get the better; that it would be awkward to lay down the title of lord high admiral, but it was easier to lay down that than to lay down his head; that as for a *cauda*, though it was certainly agreeable to be in the fashion, he could do very well without one, and when he got back to Stunnin'tun, should the worst come to the worst, there was a certain saddler in the place who could give him as good a fit as the one he had lost; that Miss Poke would have been greatly scandalized, however, had he come home after decapitation; that it might be well to sail for Leaplow as soon as convenient, for in that country he understood bobs were in fashion, and he admitted that he should not like to cruise about Leaphigh, for any great length of time, unless he could look as other people look; for his part, he bore no one a grudge and he freely forgave everybody but Bob, out of whom, the Lord willing, he proposed to have full satisfaction, before the ship should be twenty-four hours at sea, etc., etc., etc.

Such was the general tendency of the remarks of Captain Poke, as we proceeded toward the port, where he embarked and went on board the *Walrus* with some eagerness, having learned that our rear-admirals and post-captains had, indeed, yielded to the calls of nature, and had all gone to their duty swearing they would rather be foremast jacks in a well-victualed ship, than the king of Leaphigh upon nuts.

The captain had no sooner entered the

boat, taking his head with him, than I began to make my acknowledgments to my brother Downright for the able manner in which he had defended my fellow human being; paying, at the same time, some well-merited compliments to the ingenious and truly philosophical distinctions of the Leaphigh system of jurisprudence.

"Spare your thanks and your commendations, I beg of you, good Sir John," returned the brigadier, as we walked back toward my lodgings. "We did as well as circumstances would allow; though our whole defense would have been upset, had not the chief-justice very luckily been unable to read his own handwriting. As for the principles and forms of the monikin law — for in these particulars Leaplow is very much like Leaphigh—as you have seen them displayed in these two suits, why, they are such as we have. I do not pretend that they are faultless; on the contrary, I could point out improvements myself—but we get on with them as well as we can; no doubt, among men, you have codes that will better bear examination."

CHAPTER XXII.

A NEOPHYTE IN DIPLOMACY—DIPLOMATIC INTRODUCTION — A CALCULATION — A SHIPMENT OF OPINIONS — HOW TO CHOOSE AN INVOICE, WITH AN ASSORTMENT.

I NOW began seriously to think of sailing for Leaplow; for, I confess, I was heartily tired of being thought the governor of his Royal Highness Prince Bob, and pined to be restored once more to my proper place in society. I was the more incited to make the change, by the representations of the brigadier, who assured me that it was sufficient to come from foreign parts, to be esteemed a nobleman in Leaplow, and that I need not apprehend in his country any of the ill treatment I had received in the one in which I now was. After talking over the matter, therefore, in a familiar way, we determined to repair at once to the Leaplow legation, in order to ask for our passports, and to offer, at the same time, to carry any dispatches that Judge People's Friend might have prepared for his government — it being the custom of the Leaplowers to trust to these godsends in carrying on their diplomatic correspondence.

We found the judge in undress, and a very different figure he cut, certainly, from that which he made when I saw him the previous night at court. There he was all *queue;* now he was all *bob*. He seemed glad to see us, however, and quite delighted when I told him of the intention to sail to Leaplow, as soon as the wind served. He instantly asked a passage for himself, with republican simplicity.

There was to be another turn of the great and little wheel, he said, and it was quite important for himself to be on the spot; for, although everything was, beyond all question, managed with perfect republican propriety, yet somehow, and yet he did not know exactly how, but *somehow*, those who are on the spot always get the best prizes. If I could give him a passage, therefore, he would esteem it a great personal favor; and I might depend on it, the circumstance would be well received by the party. Although I did not very well understand what he meant by this party, which was to view the act so kindly, I very cheerfully told the judge that the apartments lately occupied by my Lord Chatterino and his friends were perfectly at his disposal. I was then asked when I intended to sail; and the answer was, the instant the wind hauled, so we could lay out of the harbor. It might be within half an hour. Hereupon Judge People's Friend begged I would have the goodness to wait until he could hunt up a *chargé d'affaires*. His instructions were most peremptory never to leave the legation without a *chargé d'affaires;* but he would just brush his bob, and run into the street, and look one up in five minutes, if I would promise to wait so long. It would have been unkind to refuse so trifling a favor, and the promise was given. The judge

must have run as fast as his legs would carry him; for, in about ten minutes, he was back again, with a diplomatic recruit. He told me his heart had misgiven him sadly. The three first to whom he offered the place had plumply refused it, and, indeed, he did not know but he should have a quarrel or two on his hands; but, at last, he had luckily found one who could get nothing else to do, and he pinned him on the spot.

So far everything had gone on swimmingly; but the new *chargé* had, most unfortunately, a very long *cauda*, a fashion that was inexorably proscribed by the Leaplow usages, except in cases where the representative went to court—for it seems the Leaplow political ethics, like your country buck, has two dresses; one for every-day wear, and one for Sundays. The judge intimated to his intended substitute that it was absolutely indispensable he should submit to an amputation, or he could not possibly confer the appointment, *queues* being proscribed at home by both public opinions, the horizontal and the perpendicular. To this the candidate objected, that he very well knew the Leaplow usages on this head, but that he had seen his excellency himself going to court with a singularly apparent brush; and he had supposed from that, and from sundry other little occurrences he did not care to particularize, that the Leaplowers were not so bigoted in their notions but they could act on the principle of doing at Rome as is done by the Romans. To this the judge replied, that this principle was certainly recognized in all things that were agreeable, and that he knew, from experience, how hard it was to go in a bob when all around him went in *caudæ;* but that tails were essentially anti-republican, and as such, had been formally voted down in Leaplow where even the great sachem did not dare to wear one, let him long for it as much as he would; and if it were known that a public *chargé* offended in this particular, although he might be momentarily protected by one of the public opinions, the matter would certainly be taken up by the opposition public opinion, and then the people might order a new turn of the little wheel, which, Heaven knew! occurred now a great deal oftener than was either profitable or convenient.

Hereupon the candidate deliberately undid the fastenings and removed the *queue*, showing, to our admiration, that it was false, and that he was, after all, neither more or less than a Leaplower in masquerade; which, by the way, I afterward learned, was very apt to be the case with a great many of that eminently original people, when they got within the limits of their own beloved land. Judge People's Friend was now perfectly delighted. He told us this was exactly what he could most have wished for. "Here is a bob," said he, "for the horizontals and perpendiculars, and there is a capital ready-made *cauda* for his majesty and his majesty's first cousin! A Leaphighized Leaplower, more especially if there be a dash of caricature about him, is the very thing in our diplomacy." Finding matters so much to his mind, the judge made out the letter of appointment on the spot, and then proceeded to give his substitute the usual instructions.

"You are on all occasions," he said, "to take the utmost care not to offend the court of Leaphigh, or the meanest of the courtiers, by advancing any of our peculiar opinions, all of which, beyond dispute, you have at your finger-ends; on this score, you are to be so particular that you may even, in your own person, *pro tempore*, abandon republicanism—yea, sacred republicanism itself!—knowing that it can easily be resumed on your return home again, you are to remember there is nothing so undiplomatic, or even vulgar, as to have an opinion on any subject, unless it should be the opinion of the persons you may happen to be in company with; and, as we have the reputation of possessing that quality in an eminent degree, everywhere but at home, take especial heed to eschew vulgarity—if you can; you will have the greatest care, also, to wear the shortest bob in all your private, and the longest tail in all your public, relations, this being one of the most important of the celebrated checks

and balances of our government; our institutions being expressly formed by the mass, for the particular benefit of all, you will be excessively careful not to let the claims of any one citizen, or even any set of citizens, interfere with that harmony which it is so necessary, for the purposes of trade, to maintain with all foreign courts; which courts being accustomed themselves to consider their subjects as cattle, to be worked in the traces of the state, are singularly restive whenever they hear of any individual being made of so much importance.

"Should any Leaplower become troublesome on this score, give him a bad name at once; and in order to effect that object with your own single-minded and right-loving countrymen, swear that he is a disorganizer, and, my life on it, both public opinions at home will sustain you; for there is nothing on which our public opinions agree so well as the absolute deference which they pay to foreign public opinions—and this the more especially, in all matters that are likely to affect profits, by deranging commerce. You will, above all things, make it a point to be in constant relations with some of the readiest paragraph-writers of the newspapers, in order to see that facts are properly stated at home. I would advise you to look out some foreigner, who has never seen Leaplow, for this employment; one that is also paid to write for the journals of Leapup, or Leapdown, or some other foreign country; by which means you will be sure to get an impartial agent, or one who can state things in your own way, who is already half paid for his services, and who will not be likely to make blunders by meddling with distinctive thought. When a person of this character is found, let him drop a line now and then in favor of your own sagacity and patriotism; and if he should say a pleasant thing occasionally about me, it will do no harm, but may help the little wheel to turn more readily. In order to conceal his origin, let your paragraph agent use the word *our* freely; the use of this word, as you know, being the only qualification of citizenship in Leaplow. Let him begin to spell the word O-U-R, and then proceed to pronounce it, and be careful that he does not spell it H-O-U-R, which might betray his origin.

"Above all things, you will be patriotic and republican, avoiding the least indication of your country and its institutions, and satisfying yourself with saying that the latter are, at least, well suited to the former; if you should say this in a way to leave the impression on your hearers, that you think the former fitted for nothing else, it will be particularly agreeable and thoroughly republican, and most eminently modest and praiseworthy. You will find the diplomatic agents of all other states sensitive on the point of their peculiar particular political usages, and prompt to defend them; for this is a weakness you will rigidly abstain from imitating, for our polity being exclusively based on reason, you are to show a dignified confidence in the potency of that fundamental principle, nor in any way lessen the high character that reason already enjoys, by giving any one cause to suspect that you think reason is not fully able to take care of itself. With these leading hints, and your own natural tendencies, which I am glad to see are eminently fitted for the great objects of diplomacy, being ductile, imitative, yielding, calculating, and, above all, of a foreign disposition, I think you will be able to get on very cleverly. Cultivate, above all things, your foreign dispositions, for you are now on foreign duty, and your country poses on your shoulders and eminent talents the whole burden of its foreign interests in this part of the world."

Here the judge closed his address, which was oral, apparently well satisfied with himself and with his raw-hand in diplomacy. He then said—

"That he would now go to court to present his substitute, and to take leave himself; after which he would return as fast as possible, and detain us no longer than was necessary to put his *cauda* in pepper, to protect it against the moths; for Heaven knew what prize he might draw in the next turn of the little wheel!"

We promised to meet him at the port, where, a messenger just then informed us,

Captain Poke had landed, and was anxiously waiting our appearance. With this understanding we separated; the judge undertaking to redeem all our promises paid in at the tavern, by giving his own in their stead.

The brigadier and myself found Noah and the cook bargaining for some private adventures, with a Leaphigh broker or two who, finding that the ship was about to sail in ballast, were recommending their wares to the notice of these two worthies.

"It would be a ra'al sin, Sir John," commenced the captain, "to nèglect an occasion like this to turn a penny. The ship could carry ten thousand immigrants, and they say there are millions of them going over to Leaplow; or it might stow half the goods in Aggregation. I'm resolved, at any rate, to use my cabin privilege; and I would advise you, as owner, to look out for suthin' to pay port charges with, to say the least."

"The idea is not a bad one, friend Poke; but, as we are ignorant of the state of the market on the other side, it might be well to consult some inhabitant of the country about the choice of articles. Here is the Brigadier Downright, whom I have found to be a monikin of experience and judgment, and if you please, we will first hear what he has to say about it."

"I dabble very little in merchandise," returned the brigadier; "but, as a general principle, I should say that no article of Leaphigh manufacture would command so certain a market in Leaplow as opinions."

"Have you any of these opinions for sale?" inquired I of the broker.

"Plenty of them, sir, and of all qualities—from the very lowest to the very 'ighest prices—those that may be had for next to nothing, to those that we think a great deal of ourselves. We always keep them ready packed for exportation, and send wast invoices of them, hannually, to Leaplow in particular. Opinions are harticles that help to see each other; and a ship of the tonnage of yours might stow enough, provided they were properly assorted, to carry all before them for the season."

Expressing a wish to see the packages, we were immediately led into an adjoining warehouse, where, sure enough, there were goodly lots of the manufacture in question. I passed along the shelves, reading the inscriptions of the different packages. Pointing to several bundles that had "*Opinions on Free Trade*" written on their labels, I asked the brigadier what he thought of that article.

"Why, they would have done better a year or two since, when we were setting a new tariff; but I should think there would be less demand for them now."

"You are quite right, sir," added the broker; "we *did* send large invoices of them to Leaplow formerly, and they were all eagerly bought up the moment they arrived. A great many were dyed over again, and sold as 'ome manufacture. Most of these harticles are now shipped for Leapup, with whom we have negotiations that give them a certain value."

"'*Opinions on Democracy and on the Polity of Governments in general;*' I should think these would be of no use in Leaplow?"

"Why, sir, they goes pretty much hover the whole world. We sell powers on 'em on our own continent, near by, and a great many do go even to Leaplow; though what they does with 'em there I never could say, seeing they are all government monikins in that queer country."

An inquiring look extorted a clearer answer from the brigadier:

"To admit the fact, we have a class among us who buy up these articles with some eagerness. I can only account for it, by supposing they think differing in their tastes from the mass makes them more enlightened and peculiar."

"I'll take them all. An article that catches these propensities is sure of a sale. '*Opinions on Events;*' what can possibly be done with these?"

"That depends a little on their classification," returned the brigadier. "If they relate to Leaplow events, while they have a certain value, they cannot be termed of current value; but if they refer to the events of all the rest of the earth, take them for heaven's sake! for we trust

altogether to this market for our supplies."

On this hint I ordered the whole lot, trusting to dispose of the least fashionable by aid of those that were in vogue.

"'*Opinions on Domestic Literature.*'"

"You may buy all he has; we use no other."

"'*Opinions on Continental Literature.*'"

"Why, we know little about the goods themselves—but I think a selection might answer."

I ordered the bale cut in two, and took one half, at a venture.

"'*Opinions on Leaplow Literature,* from No. 1 up to No. 100.'"

"Ah! it is proper I should explain," put in the broker; "that we has two varieties of them 'ere harticles. One is the true harticle, as is got up by our great wits and philosophers, they says, on the most approved models; but the other is nothing but a sham harticle that is really manufactured in Leaplow, and is sent out here to get our stamp. That's all—I never deceives a customer—both sell well, I hear, on the other side, however."

I looked again at the brigadier, who quietly nodding assent, I took the whole hundred bales.

"'*Opinions on the Institutions of Leaphigh.*'"

"Why, them 'ere is assorted, being of all sizes, forms, and colors. They came coastwise and are chiefly for domestic consumption; though I have known 'em sent to Leaplow, with success."

"The consumers of this article among us," observed the brigadier, "are very select, and rarely take any but of the very best quality, But then they are usually so well stocked that I question if a new importation would pay freight. Indeed, our consumers cling very generally to the old fashions in this article, not even admitting the changes produced by time. There was an old manufacturer called Whiterock, who has a sort of Barlow-knife reputation among us, and it is not easy to get another article to compete with his. Unless they are very antiquated I would have nothing to do with them."

"Yes, this is all true, sir. We still sends to Leaplow quantities of that 'ere manufacture; and the more hantiquated the harticle, the better it sells; but then the new fashions has a most wonderful run at 'ome."

"I'll stick to the real Barlow, through thick and thin. Hunt me up a bale of his notions; let them be as old as the flood. What have we here?—'*Opinions on the Institutions of Leaplow.*'"

"Take them," said the brigadier, promptly.

"This 'ere gentleman has an hidear of the state of his own market," added the broker, giggling. "What lots of these things go across yearly—and I don't find that any on 'em ever comes back."

"'*Opinions on the state of manners and society in Leaplow.*'"

"I believe I'll take an interest in that article myself, Sir John, if you can give me a ton or two between decks. Have you many of this manufacture?"

"Lot's of 'em, sir—and they *do* sell so! That 'ere are a good article both at 'ome and abroad. My eye, how they does go off in Leaplow!"

"This appears to be also your expectation, brigadier, by your readiness to take an interest!"

"To speak the truth, nothing sells better in our beloved country."

"Permit me to remark that I find your readiness to purchase this and the last article, a little singular. If I have rightly comprehended our previous conversations, you Leaplowers profess to have improved not only on the ancient principles of polity, but on the social condition generally."

"We will talk of this during the passage homeward, Sir John Goldencalf; but, by your leave, I will take a share in the investment in 'Opinions on the State of Society and Manners in Leaplow,' especially if they treat at large on the deformities of the government, while they allow us to be genteel. This is the true notch—some of these goods have been condemned because the manufacturers hadn't sufficient skill in dyeing."

"You shall have a share, brigadier.

Harkee, Mr. Broker; I take it these said opinions come from some very well-known and approved manufactory?"

"All sorts, sir. Some good, and some good for nothing—everything sells, however. I never was in Leaplow, but we says over here, that the Leaplowers eat, and drink, and sleep on our opinions. Lord, sir, it would really do your heart good to see the stuff, in these harticles, that they does take from us without higgling!"

"I presume, brigadier, that you use them as an amusement—as a means to pass a pleasant hour of an evening—a sort of moral cigar?"

"No, sir," put in the broker, "they doesn't smoke 'em, my word on't, or they wouldn't buy 'em in such lots!"

I now thought enough had been laid in on my own account, and I turned to see what the captain was about. He was higgling for a bale marked "Opinions on the Lost Condition of the Monikin Soul." A little curious to know why he had made this selection, I led him aside, and frankly put the question.

"Why, to own the truth, Sir John," he said, "religion is an article that sells in every market, in some shape or other. Now we are all in the dark about the Leaplow tastes and usages, for I always suspect a native of the country to which I am bound, on such a p'int; and if the things shouldn't sell there, they'll at least do at Stunnin'tun. Miss Poke alone would use up what there is in that there bale, in a twelvemonth. To give the woman her due, she's a desperate consumer of snuff and religion."

We had now pretty effectually cleared the shelves, and the cook, who had come ashore, to dispose of his slush, had not yet been able to get anything.

"Here is a small bale as come *from* Leaplow, and a pinched little thing it is," said the broker, laughing; "it don't take at all, here, and it might do to go 'ome again—at any rate, you will get the drawback. It is filled with 'Distinctive Opinions of the Republic of Leaplow.'" The cook looked at the brigadier, who appeared to think the speculation doubtful. Still it was Hobson's choice; and, after a good deal of grumbling, the doctor, as Noah always called his cook, consented to take the "harticle," at half the prime cost.

Judge People's Friend now came trotting down to the port, thoroughly *en républicain*, when we immediately embarked, and in half an hour, Bob was kicked to Noah's heart's content, and the *Walrus* was fairly under way for Leaplow.

CHAPTER XXIII.

POLITICAL BOUNDARIES—POLITICAL RIGHTS—POLITICAL SELECTIONS, AND POLITICAL DISQUISITIONS; WITH POLITICAL RESULTS.

THE aquatic mile-stones of the monikin seas have been already mentioned; but I believe I omitted to say, that there was a line of demarcation drawn in the water, by means of a similar invention, to point out the limits of the jurisdiction of each State. Thus, all within these water-marks was under the laws of Leaphigh; all between them and those of some other country, was the high seas; and all within those of the other country, Leaplow, for instance, was under the exclusive jurisdiction of that other country.

With a favorable wind, the *Walrus* could run to the water-marks in about half a day; from thence to the water-marks of Leaplow was two days' sail, and another half day was necessary to reach our haven. As we drew near the legal frontiers of Leaphigh, several small fast-sailing schooners were seen hovering just without the jurisdiction of the king, quite evidently waiting our approach. One boarded us, just as the outer end of the spanker-boom got clear of the Leaphigh sovereignty. Judge People's Friend rushed to the side of the ship, and before the crew of the boat could get on deck, he had ascertained that the usual number of prizes had been put into the little wheel.

A monikin in a bob of a most pronounced character, or which appeared to

have been subjected to the second amputation, being what is called in Leaplow a bob-upon-bob, now approached, and inquired if there were any emigrants on board. He was made acquainted with our characters and objects. When he understood that our stay would most likely be short, he was evidently a little disappointed.

"Perhaps, gentlemen," he added, "you may still remain long enough to make naturalization desirable?"

"It is always agreeable to be at home in foreign countries — but are there no legal objections?"

"I see none, sir—you have no tails, I believe?"

"None but what are in our trunks. I did not know, however, but the circumstance of our being of a different species might throw some obstacles in the way."

"None in the world, sir. We act on principles much too liberal for so narrow an objection. You are but little acquainted with the institutions and policy of our beloved and most happy country, I see, sir. This is not Leaphigh, nor Leapup, nor Leapdown, nor Leapover, nor Leapthrough, nor Leapunder; but good old, hearty, liberal, free and independent, most beloved, happy, and prosperous beyond example, Leaplow. Species is of no account under our system. We would as soon naturalize one animal as another, provided it be a republican animal. I see no deficiency about any of you. All we ask is certain general principles. You go on two legs—"

"So do turkeys, sir."

"Very true—but you have no feathers."

"Neither has a donkey."

"All very right, gentlemen—you do not bray, however."

"I will not answer for that," put in the captain, sending his leg forward in a straight line, in a way to raise an outcry in Bob, that almost upset the Leaplower's proposition.

"At all events, gentlemen," he observed, "there is a test that will put the matter at rest at once."

He then desired us, in turn, to pronounce the word "our" — "*Our* liberties"—"*our* country"—"*our* firesides"—"*our* altars." Whoever expressed a wish to be naturalized, and could use this word in the proper manner and in the proper place, was entitled to be a citizen. We all did very well but the second mate, who, being a Herefordshire man, could not for the life of him get any nearer to the Doric, in the latter shibboleth, than "our halters." Now it would seem that in carrying out a great philanthropic principle in Leaplow, halters had been proscribed; for, whenever a rogue did anything amiss, it had been discovered that, instead of punishing him for the offense, the true way to remedy the evil was to punish the society against which he had offended. By this ingenious turn, society was naturally made to look out sharp how it permitted any one to offend it. This excellent idea is like that of certain Dutchmen, who, when they cut themselves with an ax, always apply salve and lint to the cruel steel, and leave the wound to heal as fast as possible.

To return to our examination: we all passed but the second mate, who hung in his halter, and was pronounced to be incorrigible. Certificates of naturalization were delivered on the spot, the fees were paid, and the schooner left us.

That night it blew a gale, and we had no more visitors until the following morning. As the sun rose, however, we fell in with three schooners, under the Leaplow flag, all of which seemed bound on errands of life or death. The first that reached us sent a boat on board, and a committee of six "bob-upon-bobs" hurried up our sides and lost no time in introducing themselves. I shall give their own account of their business and characters.

It would seem that they were what is called a "nominating committee" of the horizontals, for the city of Bivouac, the port to which we were bound, where an election was about to take place for members of the great national council. Bivouac was entitled to send seven members; and having nominated themselves, the committee were now in quest of a seventh candidate to fill the vacancy. In order to

secure the naturalized interests, it had been determined to select as new a comer as possible. This would also be maintaining the principle of liberality, in the abstract. For this reason they had been cruising for a week, as near as the law would allow to the Leaphigh boundaries, and they were now ready to take any one who would serve.

To this proposition I again objected the differences of species. Here they all fairly laughed in my face, Brigadier Downright included, giving me very distinctly to understand that they thought I had very contracted notions on matters and things, to suppose so trifling an obstacle could disturb the harmony and unity of a horizontal vote. They went for a principle, and the devil himself could not make them swerve from the pursuit of so sacred an object.

I then candidly admitted that nature had not fitted me, as admirably as it had fitted my friend the judge, for the throwing of somersaults; and I feared that when the order was given "to go to the right about," I might be found no better than a bungler. This staggered them a little; and I perceived that they looked at each other in doubt.

"But you can, at least, turn round suddenly, at need?" one of them asked, after a pause.

"Certainly, sir," I answered, giving ocular evidence that I was no idle boaster, making a complete gyration on my heels, in very good time.

"Very well!—admirably well?" they all cried in a breath. "The great political essential is to be able to perform the evolutions in their essence—the facility with which they are performed being no more than a personal merit."

"But, gentlemen, I know little more of your constitution and laws, than I have learned in a few broken discussions with my fellow travelers."

"This is a matter of no moment, sir. Our constitution, unlike that of Leaphigh, is written down, and he who runs can read; and then we have a political fugleman in the house who saves an immense deal of unnecessary study and reflection to the members. All you will have to do will be to watch his movements; and, my life on it, you will go as well through the manual exercise as the oldest member there."

"How, sir, do all the members take the maneuvers from this fugleman?"

"All the horizontals, sir—the perpendiculars have a fugleman of their own."

"Well, gentlemen, I conceive this to be an affair in which I am no judge, and I put myself entirely in the hands of my friends."

This answer was met with much commendation, and manifested, as they all protested, great political capabilities; the statesman who submitted all to his friends never failing to rise to eminence in Leaplow. The committee took my name in writing, and hastened back to their schooner, in order to get into port to promulgate the nomination. These persons were hardly off the deck before another party came up to the opposite side of the ship. They announced themselves to be a nominating committee of the perpendiculars, on exactly the same errand as their opponents. They, too, wished to propitiate the foreign interests, and were in search of a proper candidate. Captain Poke had been an attentive listener to all that occurred during the circumstances that preceded my nomination; and he now stepped promptly forward and declared his readiness to serve. As there was quite as little squeamishness on one side as on the other, and the perpendicular committee, as it owned itself, was greatly pressed for time, the horizontals having the start of them, the strangers departed with the name of NOAH POKE, THE TRIED PATRIOT, THE PROFOUND JURIST, AND THE HONEST MONIKIN, handsomely placarded on a large board—all but the name having been carefully prepared in advance.

When the committee were fairly out of the ship Noah took me aside, and made his apologies for opposing me in this important election. His reasons were numerous and ingenious, and, as usual, a little discursive. They might be summed up as follows: He never had sat

in a parliament, and he was curious to know how it would feel; it would increase the respect of the ship's company, to find their commander of so much account in a strange port; he had had some experience at Stunnin'tun by reading the newspapers, and he didn't doubt of his abilities at all, a circumstance that rarely failed of making a good legislator; the congressman in his part of the country was some such man as himself, and what was good for the goose was good for the gander; he knew Miss Poke would be pleased to hear he had been chosen; he wondered if he should be called the Honorable Noah Poke, and whether he should receive eight dollars a day and mileage from the spot where the ship then was; the perpendiculars might count on him, for his word was as good as his bond; as for the constitution, he had got on under the constitution at home, and he believed a man who could do that might get on under any constitution; he didn't intend to say a great deal in parliament, but what he did say he hoped might be recorded for the use of his children; together with a great deal more of the same sort of argumentation and apology.

The third schooner now brought us to. This vessel sent another committee, who announced themselves to be the representatives of a party that was termed the tangents. They were not numerous, but sufficiently so to hold the balance whenever the horizontals and the perpendiculars crossed each other directly at right angles, as was the case at present; and they had now determined to run a single candidate of their own. They, too, wished to fortify themselves by the foreign interests, as was natural, and had come out in quest of a proper person. I suggested the first mate; but against this Noah protested, declaring that come what would, the ship must on no account be deserted. Time passed; and while the captain and the subordinate were hotly disputing the propriety of permitting the latter to serve, Bob, who had already tasted the sweets of political importance, in his assumed character of prince-royal, stepped slyly up to the committee, and gave in his name. Noah was too much occupied to discover this well-managed movement; and by the time he had sworn to throw the mate overboard if he did not instantly relinquish all ambitious projects of this nature, he found that the tangents were off. Supposing they had gone to some other vessel, the captain allowed himself to be soothed, and all went on smoothly again.

From this time until we anchored in the bay of Bivouac, the tranquillity and discipline of the *Walrus* were undisturbed. I improved the occasion to study the constitution of Leaplow, of which the judge had a copy, and to glean such information from my companions as I believed might be useful in my future career. I thought how pleasant it would be for a foreigner to teach the Leaplows their own laws, and to explain to them the application of their own principles! Little, however, was to be got from the judge, who was just then too much occupied with some calculations concerning the chances of the little wheel, with which he had been furnished by a leading man of one of the nominating committees.

I now questioned the brigadier touching that peculiar usage of his country which rendered Leaphigh opinions concerning the Leaplow institutions, society and manners, of so much value in the market of the latter. To this I got but an indifferent answer, except it was to say that his countrymen, having cleared the interests connected with the subjects from the rubbish of time, and set everything at work, on the philosophical basis of reason and common sense, were exceedingly desirous of knowing what other people thought of the success of the experiment.

"I expect to see a nation of sages, I can assure you, brigadier; one in which even the very children are profoundly instructed in the great truths of your system; and, as to the monikins, I am not without dread of bringing my theoretical ignorance in collision with their great practical knowledge of the principles of your government."

"They are early fed on political pap."

"No doubt, sir, no doubt. How differ-

ent must they be from the females of other countries! Deeply imbued with the great distinctive principles of your system, devoted to the education of their children in the same sublime truths, and indefatigable in their discrimination among the meanest of their households!"

"Hum!"

"Now, sir, even in England, a country which, I trust, is not the most debased on earth, you will find women, beautiful, intellectual, accomplished and patriotic, who limit their knowledge of these fundamental points to a zeal for a *clique*, and the whole of whose eloquence on great national questions is bounded by a few heartfelt wishes for the downfall of their opponents."

"It is very much so at Stunnin'tun, too, if truth must be spoken," remarked Noah, who had been a listener.

"Who, instead of instructing the young suckers that cling to their sides in just notions of general social distinctions, mature their young antipathies with pettish philippics against some luckless chief of the adverse party."

"'Tis pretty much the same at Stunnin'tun, as I live."

"Who rarely study the great lessons of history in order to point out to the future statesmen and heroes of the empire the beacons of crime, the incentives for public virtue, or the charters of their liberties; but who are indefatigable in echoing the cry of the hour, however false or vulgar, and who humanize their attentive offspring by softly expressed wishes that Mr. Canning, or some other frustrator of the designs of their friends, were fairly hanged!"

"Stuninn'tun, all over!"

"Beings that are angels in form—soft, gentle, refined, and tearful as the evening with its dews, when there is a question of humanity or suffering; but who seem strangely transformed into she-tigers whenever any one but those of whom they can approve attain to power; and who, instead of entwining their soft arms around their husbands and brothers to restrain them from the hot strife of opinions, cheer them on by their encouragement, and throw dirt with the volubility and wit of fish-women."

"Miss Poke, to the backbone!"

"In short, sir, I expect to see an entirely different state of things at Leaplow. There, when a political adversary is bespattered with mud, your gentle monikins, doubtless, appease anger by mild soothings of philosophy, tempering zeal by wisdom, and regulating error by apt and unanswerable quotations from that great charter which is based on the eternal and immutable principles of right."

"Well, Sir John, if you speak in this elocutionary manner in the house," cried the delighted Noah, "I shall be shy of answering! I doubt, now, if the brigadier himself could repeat all you have just said."

"I have forgotten to inquire, Mr. Downright, a little about your Leaplow constituency. The suffrage is, beyond question, confined to those members of society who possess a 'social stake.'"

"Certainly, Sir John. They who live and breathe."

"Surely none vote but those who possess the money, and houses, and lands of the country."

"Sir, you are altogether in error; all vote who possess ears, and eyes, and noses, and bobs, and lives, and hopes, and wishes, and feelings, and wants. Wants we conceive to be a much truer test of political fidelity than possessions."

"This is a novel doctrine, indeed! but it is in direct hostility to the social-stake system."

"You were never more right, Sir John, as respects your own theory, or never more wrong as respects the truth. In Leaplow we contend—and contend justly—that there is no broader or bolder fallacy than to say that a representation of mere effects, whether in houses, land, merchandise, or money, is a security for a good government. Property is affected by measures; and the more a monikin has the greater is the bribe to induce him to consult his own interests, although it should be at the expense of those of everybody else."

"But, sir, the interest of the community

is composed of the aggregate of these interests."

"Your pardon, Sir John; nothing is composed of it but the aggregate interests of a class. If your government is instituted for their benefit only, your social-stake system is all well enough; but if the object be the general good, you have no choice but to trust its custody to the general keeping. Let us suppose two men —since you happen to be a man, and not a monikin—let us suppose two men perfectly equal in morals, intelligence, public virtue and patriotism, one of whom shall be rich and the other shall have nothing. A crisis arrives in the affairs of their common country, and both are called upon to exercise their franchise on a question—as almost all great nations must—that unavoidably will have some influence on property generally. Which would give the most impartial vote—he who, of necessity, must be swayed by his personal interests, or he who has no inducement of the sort to go astray?"

"Certainly he who has nothing to influence him to go wrong. But the question is not fairly put—"

"Your pardon, Sir John, it is put fairly as an abstract question, and one that is to prove a principle. I am glad to hear you say that a man would be apt to decide in this manner, for it shows his identity with a monikin. We hold that all of us are apt to think most of ourselves on such occasions."

"My dear brigadier, do not mistake sophistry for reason. Surely, if power belong only to the poor—and the poor, or the comparatively poor, always compose the mass—they would exercise it in a way to strip the rich of their possessions."

"We think not, in Leaplow. Cases might exist in which such a state of things would occur under a reaction; but reactions imply abuses, and are not to be quoted to maintain principle. He who was drunk yesterday may need an unnatural stimulus to-day; while he who is uniformly temperate preserves his proper tone of body without recourse to a remedy so dangerous. Such an experiment, under a strong provocation, might possibly be made; but it could scarcely be made twice among any people, and not even once among a people that submits in season to a just division of its authority, since it is obviously destructive of a leading principle of civilization. According to our monikin histories, all the attacks upon property have been produced by property's grasping at more than fairly belongs to its immunities. If you make political power a concomitant of property, both may go together, certainly; but if kept separate the danger of the latter will never exceed the danger in which it is put daily by the arts of the money-getters, who are, in truth, the greatest foes of property, as it belongs to others."

I remembered Sir Joseph Job, and could not but admit that the brigadier had, at least, some truth on his side.

"But do you deny that the sentiment of property elevates the mind, ennobles, and purifies?"

"Sir, I do not pretend to determine what may be the fact among men, but we hold among monikins that 'the love of money is the root of all evil."

"How, sir! do you account the education which is a consequence of property as nothing?"

"If you mean, my dear Sir John, that which property is most apt to teach, we hold it to be selfishness; but if you mean that he who has money, as a rule, will also have information to guide him aright, I must answer that experience, which is worth a thousand theories, tells us differently. We find that on questions which are purely between those who have, and those who have not, the *haves* are commonly united, and we think this would be the fact if they were as unschooled as bears; but on all other questions they certainly do great discredit to education, unless you admit that there are, in every case, *two* rights; for, with us, the most highly educated generally take the two extremes of every argument. I state this to be the fact with monikins, you will remember—doubtless educated men agree much better."

"But, my good brigadier, if your position about the greater impartiality and independence of the elector who is not influenced by his private interests be true, a country would do well to submit its elections to a body of foreign umpires."

"It would, indeed, Sir John, if it were certain these foreign umpires would not abuse the power to their own particular advantage; if they could thoroughly understand the character, habits, wants, and resources of another people. As things are, however, we believe it the wisest to trust our own elections to ourselves—not to a portion of ourselves—but to all of ourselves."

"Immigrants included," put in the captain.

"Why, we do carry the principle well out in the case of gentlemen like yourselves," returned the brigadier, politely; "but liberality is a virtue. As a principle, Sir John, your idea of referring the choice of our representatives to strangers has more merit than you probably imagine, though certainly impracticable, for the reasons already given. When we seek justice we commonly look out for some impartial judge. Such a judge is unattainable, however, in the matter of the interests of a state, for the simple reason that power of this sort, permanently wielded, would be perverted on a principle which, after a most scrupulous analysis, we have been compelled to admit is incorporated with the very monikin nature—viz., selfishness. I make no manner of doubt that you men, however, are altogether superior to an influence so unworthy?"

Here I could only borrow the use of the brigadier's "Hum!"

"Having ascertained that it would not do to submit the control of our affairs to utter strangers, or to those whose interests are not identified with our own, we set about seeing what could be done with a selection from among ourselves. Here we were again met by that same obstinate principle of selfishness; and we were finally driven to take shelter in the experiment of intrusting the interests of all to the management of all."

"And, sir, are these the opinions of Leaphigh?"

"Very far from it. The difference between Leaphigh and Leaplow is just this: the Leaphighers, being an ancient people, with a thousand vested interests, and induced, as time improves the mind, to seek reasons for their facts; while we Leaplowers, being unshackled by any such restraints, have been able to make an effort to form our facts on our reasons."

"Why do you, then, so much prize Leaphigh opinions on Leaplow facts?"

"Why does every little monikin believe his own father and mother to be just the two wisest, best, most virtuous, and discreetest old monikins in the whole world, until time, opportunity, and experience show him his error?"

"Do you make no exceptions, then, in your franchise, but admit every citizen who, as you say, has a nose, ears, bob and wants, to the exercise of the suffrage?"

"Perhaps we are less scrupulous on this head than we ought to be, since we do make ignorance and want of character bars to the privilege. Qualifications beyond mere birth and existence may be useful, but they are badly chosen when they are brought to the test of purely material possessions. This practice has arisen in the world from the fact that they who had property had power, and not because they ought to have it."

"My dear brigadier, this is flying in the face of all experience."

"For the reason just given, and because all experience has hitherto commenced at the wrong end. Society should be constructed as you erect a house; not from the roof down, but from the foundation upward."

"Admitting, however, that your house has been badly constructed at first, in repairing it would you tear away the walls at random, at the risk of bringing all down about your ears?"

"I would first see that sufficient props were reared, and then proceed with vigor, though always with caution. Courage in such an experiment is less to be dreaded than timidity. Half the evils of life,

social, personal, and political, are as much the effects of moral cowardice as of fraud."

I then told the brigadier that, as his countrymen rejected the inducements of property in the selection of the political base of their social compact, I expected to find a capital substitute in virtue."

"I have always heard that virtue is the great essential of a free people, and doubtless your Leaplowers are perfect models in this important particular?"

The brigadier smiled before he answered me, first looking about to the right and left, as if to regale himself with the odor of perfection.

"Many theories have been broached on these subjects," he replied, "in which there has been some confusion between cause and effect. Virtue is no more a cause of freedom, except as it is connected with intelligence, than vice is a cause of slavery. Both may be consequences, but it is not easy to say how either is necessarily a cause. There is a homely saying among us monikins, which is quite to the point in this matter: 'Set a rogue to catch a rogue.' Now, the essence of a free government is to be found in the responsibility of its agents. He who governs without responsibility is a master, while he who discharges the duties of a functionary under a practical responsibility is a servant. This is the only true test of governments, let them be mystified as they may in other respects. Responsibility to the mass of the nation is the criterion of freedom. Now, responsibility is the *substitute* for virtue in a politician, as discipline is the substitute for courage in a soldier. An army of brave monikins, without discipline would be very apt to be worsted by an army of monikins of less natural spirit, with discipline. So a corps of originally virtuous politicians, without responsibility, would be very apt to do more selfish, lawless, and profligate acts, than a corps of less virtue, who were kept rigidly under the rod of responsibility. Unrestrained power is a greater corrupter of virtue of itself; while the liabilities of a restrained authority are very apt to keep it in check. At least, such is the fact with us monikins—men very possibly get along better."

"Let me tell you, Mr. Downright, you are now uttering opinions that are diametrically opposed to those of the world, which considers virtue an indispensable ingredient in a republic."

"The world—meaning always the monikin world—knows very little about real political liberty, except as a theory. We of Leaplow are, in effect, the only people who have had much to do with it, and I am now telling you what is the result of my own observation in my own country. If monikins were purely virtuous, there would be no necessity for government at all; but, being what they are, we think it wisest to set them to watch each other."

"But yours is self-government, which implies self-restraint; and self-restraint is but another word for virtue."

"If the merit of our system depended on self-government, in your signification, or on self-restraint in any signification, it would not be worth the trouble of this argument, Sir John Goldencalf. This is one of those balmy fallacies with which ill-judging moralists endeavor to stimulate monikins to good deeds. Our government is based on a directly opposite principle; that of watching and restraining each other, instead of trusting to our ability to restrain ourselves. It is the want of responsibility, and not of constant and active presence, which infers virtue and self-control. No one would willingly lay legal restraints on himself in anything, while all are very happy to restrain their neighbors. This refers to the positive and necessary rules of intercourse, and the establishment of rights; as to mere morality, laws do very little toward enforcing its ordinances. Morals usually come of instruction, and when all have political power instruction is a security that all desire."

"But when all vote all may wish to abuse their trust to their own special advantage, and a political chaos will be the consequence."

"Such a result is impossible, except as especial advantage is identified with general advantage. A community can no

more buy itself in this manner than a monikin can eat himself, let him be as ravenous as he will. Admitting that all are rogues, necessity would compel a compromise."

"You make out a plausible theory, and I have little doubt that I shall find you the wisest, the most logical, the discreetest, and the most consistent community I have yet visited. But another word: how is it that our friend, the judge, gave such equivocal instructions to his *chargé;* and why, in particular, did he lay so much stress on the employment of means, which gave the lie flatly to all you have told me?"

Brigadier Downright hereupon stroked his chin, and observed that he thought there might possibly be a shift of wind; and he also wondered, quite audibly, when he should make the land. I afterward persuaded him to allow that a monikin was but a monikin, after all, whether he had the advantages of universal suffrage, or lived under a despot.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN ARRIVAL — AN ELECTION — ARCHITECTURE — A ROLLING-PIN, AND PATRIOTISM OF THE MOST APPROVED WATER.

In due time the coast of Leaplow made its appearance, close under our larboard bow. So sudden was our arrival in this novel and extraordinary country, that we were very near running on it before we got a glimpse of its shores. The seamanship of Captain Poke, however, stood us in hand; and, by the aid of a very clever pilot, we were soon safely moored in the harbor of Bivouac. In this happy land there was no registration, no passports, "no nothin'"—as Mr. Poke pointedly expressed it. The formalities were soon observed, although I had occasion to remark how much easier, after all, it is to get along in this world with vice than with virtue. A bribe offered to a custom-house officer was refused; and the only trouble I had on the occasion arose from this awkward obtrusion of a conscience. However, the difficulty was overcome, though not quite as easily as if *douceurs* had happened to be in fashion; and we were permitted to land with all our necessary effects.

The city of Bivouac presented a singular aspect as I first put foot within its hallowed streets. The houses were all covered with large placards, which, at first, I took to be the lists of the wares to be vended, for the place is notoriously commercial; but which, on examination, I soon discovered were merely electioneering handbills. The reader will figure to himself my pleasure and surprise on reading the first that offered. It ran as follows:

"HORIZONTAL NOMINATION.

"Horizontal-Systematic-Indoctrinated-Republicans, Attention!

"Your sacred rights are in danger; your dearest liberties are menaced; your wives and children are on the point of dissolution; the infamous and unconstitutional position that the sun gives light by day, and the moon by night, is openly and impudently propagated, and now is the only occasion that will ever offer to arrest an error so pregnant with deception and domestic evils. We present to your notice a suitable defender of all those near and dear intersts, in the person of

JOHN GOLDENCALF,

the known patriot, the approved legislator, the profound philosopher, the incorruptible statesman. To our adopted fellow-citizens we need not recommend Mr. Goldencalf, for he is truly one of themselves; to the native citizens we will only say, 'Try him, and you will be more than satisfied.'"

I found this placard of great use, for it gave me the first information I had yet had of the duty I was expected to perform in the coming session of the great council; which was merely to demonstrate that the moon gave light by day, and that the sun gave light by night. Of course, I immediately set about, in my own mind, hunting up the proper arguments by which this grave political hypothesis was to be

properly maintained. The next placard was in favor of—

"NOAH POKE,

the experienced navigator, who will conduct the ship of state into the haven of prosperity — the practical astronomer, who knows by frequent observations that lunars are not to be got in the dark.

"'Perpendiculars be plumb, and lay your enemies on their backs!'"

After this I fell in with—

"THE HONORABLE ROBERT SMUT

is confidently recommended to all their fellow-citizens by the nominating committee of the Anti-Approved-Sublimated-Politico-Tangents, as a real gentleman, a ripe scholar,* an enlightened politician, and a sound democrat."

But I should fill the manuscript with nothing else, were I to record a tithe of the commendations and abuse that were heaped on us all by a community to whom, as yet, we were absolutely strangers. A single sample of the latter will suffice:

"AFFIDAVIT.

"Personally appeared before me, John Equity, justice of the peace, Peter Veracious, etc., etc., who, being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists, doth depose and say, viz.: That he was intimately acquainted with one John Goldencalf in his native country, and that he is personally knowing to the fact that he, the said John Goldencalf, has three wives, seven illegitimate children, is moreover a bankrupt without character, and that he was obliged to emigrate in consequence of having stolen a sheep.

"Sworn, etc.

"(Signed) PETER VERACIOUS."

I naturally felt a little indignant at this impudent statement, and was about to call upon the first passer-by for the address of Mr. Veracious, when the skirts of my skin were seized by one of the horizontal nominating committee, and I was covered with congratulations on my being happily elected. Success is an admirable plaster for all wounds, and I really forgot to have the affair of the sheep and of the illegitimate children inquired into; although I still protest, that had fortune been less propitious, the rascal who promulgated this calumny would have been made to smart for his temerity. In less than five minutes it was the turn of Captain Poke. He, too, was congratulated in due form; for, as it appeared, the "immigrant interest," as Noah termed it, had actually carried a candidate on each of the two great opposing tickets. Thus far, all was well; for, after sharing his mess so long, I had not the smallest objection to sit in the Leaplow parliament with the worthy sealer; but our mutual surprise, and, I believe I might add, indignation, were a great deal excited by shortly encountering a walking notice, which contained a programme of the proceedings to be observed at the "*Reception* of the Honorable Robert Smut."

It would seem that the horizontals and the perpendiculars had made so many spurious and mystified ballots, in order to propitiate the tangents and to cheat each other, that this young blackguard actually stood at the head of the poll! a political phenomenon, as I subsequently discovered, however, by no means of rare occurrence in the Leaplow history of the periodical selection of the wisest and best.

There was certainly an accumulation of interest on arriving in a strange land, to find one's self both extolled and vituperated on most of the corners in its capital, and to be elected to its parliament, all in the same day. Still, I did not permit myself to be either so much elated or so much depressed, as not to have all my eyes about me, in order to get as correctly as possible, and as quickly as possible, some insight into the characters, tastes, habits, wishes, and wants of my constituents.

I have already declared that it is my intention to dwell chiefly on the moral excellences and peculiarities of the people of the monikin world. Still I could not walk through the streets of Bivouac without

* I afterward found this was a common phrase in Leaplow, being uniformly applied to every monikin who wore spectacles.

observing a few physical usages. that I shall mention, because they have an evident connection with the state of society, and the historical recollections of this interesting portion of the polar region.

In the first place, I remarked that all sorts of quadrupeds are just as much at home in the promenades of the town as the inhabitants themselves, a fact that I make no doubt has some very proper connection with that principle of equal rights on which the institutions of the country are established. In the second place, I could not but see that their dwellings are constructed on the very minimum of base, propping each other, as emblematic of the mutual support obtained by the republican system, and seeking their development in height for the want of breadth; a singularity of customs that I did not hesitate at once to refer to a usage of living in trees at an epoch not very remote. In the third place, I noted, instead of entering their dwellings near the ground, like men, and, indeed, like most other unfledged animals, that they ascend by means of external steps to an aperture about half way between the roof and the earth, where, having obtained admission, they go up or down within the building, as occasion requires. This usage, I made no question, was preserved from the period, and that, too, no distant one, when the savage condition of the country induced them to seek protection against the ravages of wild beasts, by having recourse to ladders, which were drawn up after the family into the top of the tree, as the sun sunk beneath the horizon.

These steps or ladders are generally of some white material, in order that they may, even now, be found in the dark, should the danger be urgent; although I do not know that Bivouac is a more disorderly or unsafe town than any other in the present day. But habits linger in the usages of a people, and are often found to exist as fashions, long after the motive of their origin has ceased and been forgotten. As a proof of this many of the dwellings of Bivouac have still enormous iron *chevaux-de-frise* before the doors, and near the base of the stone ladders; a practice unquestionably taken from the original, unsophisticated, domestic defenses of this wary and enterprising race. Among a great many of these *chevaux-de-frise*, I remarked certain iron images, that resemble the kings of chess-men, and which I took, at first, to be symbols of the calculating qualities of the owners of the mansions, a species of republican heraldry; but which the brigadier told me, on inquiry, were no more than a fashion that had descended from the custom of having stuffed images before the doors, in the early days of the settlement, to frighten away the beasts at night, precisely as we station scarecuows in a cornfield. Two of these well-padded sentinels, with a stick stuck up in a firelock attitude, he assured me, had often been known to maintain a siege of a week, against a she-bear and a numerous family of hungry cubs, in the olden times; and, now that the danger was gone, he presumed the families which had caused these iron monuments to be erected had done so to record some marvelous risks of this nature, from which their forefathers had escaped by means of so ingenious an expedient.

Everything in Bivouac bears the impress of the sublime principle of the institutions. The houses of the private citizens, for instance, overtop the roofs of all the public edifices, to show that the public is merely a servant of the citizen. Even the churches have this peculiarity, proving that the road to heaven is not independent of the popular will. The great hall of justice, an edifice of which the Bivouackers are exceedingly proud, is constructed in the same recumbent style, the architect, with a view to protect himself from the imputation of believing that the firmament was within reach of his hand, having taken the precaution to run up a wooden finger-board from the center of the building, which points to the place where, according to the notions of all other people, the ridge of the roof itself should have been raised. So very apparent was this peculiarity, Noah observed that it seemed to him as if the whole "'arth" had been rolled down by a great

political rolling-pin, by way of giving the country its finishing touch.

While making these remarks, one drew near at a brisk trot, who, Mr. Downright observed, eagerly desired our acquaintance. Surprised at his pretending to know such a fact without any previous communication, I took the liberty of asking why he thought that we were the particular objects of the other's haste.

"Simply because you are fresh arrivals. This person is one of a sufficiently numerous class among us, who, devoured by a small ambition, seek notoriety—which, by the way, they are near obtaining in more respects than they probably desire—by obtruding themselves on every stranger who touches our shore. Theirs is not a generous and frank hospitality that would fain serve others, but an irritable vanity that would glorify themselves. The liberal and enlightened monikin is easily to be distinguished from all of this *clique*. He is neither ashamed of, nor bigoted in favor of any usages, simply because they are domestic. With him the criterions of merit are propriety, taste, expediency, and fitness. He distinguishes, while these crave; he neither wholly rejects, nor wholly lives by imitation, but judges for himself, and uses his experience as a respectable and useful guide; while these think that all they can attain that is beyond the reach of their neighbors is, as a matter of course, the sole aim of life. Strangers they seek, because they have long since decreed that this country, with its usages, its people, and all it contains, being founded on popular rights, is all that is debased and vulgar, themselves and a few of their own particular friends excepted; and they are never so happy as when they are gloating on, and basking in, the secondary refinements of what we call the 'old region.' Their own attainments, however, being pretty much God-sends, or such as we all pick up in our daily intercourse, they know nothing of any foreign country but Leaphigh, whose language we happen to speak; and, as Leaphigh is also the very *beau ideal* of exclusion, in its usages, opinions, and laws, they deem all who come from that part of the earth as rather more entitled to their profound homage than any other strangers."

Here Judge People's Friend, who had been vigorously pumping the nominating committee on the subject of the chances of the little wheel, suddenly left us, with a sneaking, self-abased air, and with his nose to the ground, like a dog who has just caught a fresh scent.

The next time we met with the ex-envoy he was in mourning for some political backsliding that I never comprehended. He had submitted to a fresh amputation of the bob, and had so thoroughly humbled the seat of reason that it was not possible for the most envious and malignant disposition to fancy he had a particle of brains left. He had, moreover, caused every hair to be shaved off his body, which was as naked as the hand, and altogether he presented an edifying picture of penitence and self-abasement. I afterward understood that this purification was considered perfectly satisfactory, and that he was thought to be again within the limits of the most patriotic patriots.

In the meantime the Bivouacker had approached me, and was introduced as Mr. Gilded Wriggle.

"Count Poke de Stunnin'tun, my good sir," said the brigadier, who was the master of ceremonies on this occasion, "and the Mogul Goldencalf—both noblemen of ancient lineage, admirable privileges, and of the purest water—gentlemen who, when they are at home, have six dinners daily, always sleep on diamonds, and whose castles are none of them less than six leagues in extent."

"My friend, General Downright, has taken too much pains, gentlemen," interrupted our new acquaintance; "your rank and extraction being self-evident. Welcome to Leaplow! I beg you will make free with my house, my dog, my cat, my horse, and myself. I particularly beg that your first, your last, and all the intermediate visits, will be to me. Well, Mogul, what do you really think of us? You have now been on shore long enough to have formed a pretty accurate notion

of our institutions and habits. I beg you will not judge of all of us by what you see in the streets——"

"It is not my intention, sir."

"You are cautious, I perceive? We are in an awful condition, I confess; trampled on by the vulgar, and far, very far, from being the people that, I dare say, you expected to see. I couldn't be made the assistant-alderman of my ward, if I wished it, sir; too much jacobinism —the people are fools, sir; know nothing, sir; not fit to rule themselves, much less their betters, sir—here have a set of us, some hundreds in this very town, been telling them what fools they are, how unfit they are to manage their own affairs, and how fast they are going to the devil, any time these twenty years, and still we have not yet persuaded them to intrust one of us with authority! To say the truth, we are in a most miserable condition; and if anything *could* ruin this country, democracy would have ruined it just thirty-five years ago."

Here the wailings of Mr. Wriggle were interrupted by the wailing of Count Poke de Stunnin'tun. The latter, by gazing in admiration at the speaker, had inadvertently struck his toe against one of the forty-three thousand seven hundred and sixty inequalities of the pavement (for everything in Leaplow is exactly equal, except the streets and highways), and fallen forward on his nose. I have already had occasion to allude to the sealer's readiness in using opprobrious epithets. This *contretemps* happened in the principal street of Bivouac, or in what is called the Widepath, an avenue of more than a league in extent; but notwithstanding its great length, Noah took it up at one end and abused it all the way to the other, with a precision, fidelity, rapidity and point, that excited general admiration. "It was the dirtiest, worst-paved, meanest, vilest street he had ever seen, and if they had it at Stunnin'tun, instead of using it as a street at all, they would fence it up at each end, and turn it into a hog-lot." Here Brigadier Downright betrayed unequivocal signs of alarm. Drawing us aside, he vehemently demanded of the captain if he were mad, to berate in this unheard of manner the touchstone of Bivouac sentiment, nationality, taste, and elegance! This street was never spoken of except by the use of superlatives; a usage, by the way, that Noah himself had by no means neglected. It was commonly thought to be the longest and the shortest, the widest and the narrowest, the best-built and the worst-built avenue in the universe. "Whatever you say or do," he continued, "whatever you think or believe, never deny the superlatives of the Widepath. If asked if you ever saw a street so crowded, although there be room to wheel a regiment, swear it is stifling: if required to name another promenade so free from interruption, protest, by your soul, that the place is a desert! Say what you will of the institutions of the country—"

"How!" I exclaimed; "of the sacred rights of monikins?"

"Bedaub them, and the mass of the monikins, too, with just as much filth as you please. Indeed, if you wish to circulate freely in genteel society, I would advise you to get a pretty free use of the words, 'jacobins,' 'rabble,' 'mob,' 'agrarians,' '*canaille*,' and 'democrats'; for they recommend many to notice who possess nothing else. In our happy and independent country, it is a sure sign of lofty sentiment, a finished education, a regulated intellect, and a genteel intercourse, to know how to bespatter all that portion of your fellow-creatures, for instance, who live in one-story edifices."

"I find all this very extraordinary, your government being professedly a government of the mass!"

"You have intuitively discovered the reason—is it not fashionable to abuse the government everywhere? Whatever you do, in genteel life, ought to be based on liberal and elevated principles; and therefore, abuse all that is animate in Leaplow, the present company, with their relatives and quadrupeds, excepted; but do not raise your blaspheming tongues against anything that is inanimate! Respect, I entreat of you, the houses, the trees, the rivers, the mountains, and, above all, in

Bivouack, respect the Widepath! We are a people of lively sensibilities, and are tender of the reputations of even our stocks and stones. Even the Leaplow philosophers are all of a mind on this subject."

"King!"

"Can you account for this very extraordinary peculiarity, brigadier?"

"Surely you cannot be ignorant that all which is property is sacred! We have a great respect for property, sir, and do not like to hear our wares underrated. But lay it on the mass so much the harder, and you will only be thought to be in possession of a superior and a refined intelligence."

Here we turned again to Mr. Wriggle, who was dying to be noticed once more.

"Ah! gentlemen, last from Leaphigh!"—he had been questioning one of our attendants. "How comes on that great and consistent people?"

"As usual, sir—great and consistent."

"I think, however, we are quite their equals, eh?—chips of the same blocks?"

"No, sir—blocks of the same chips."

Mr. Wriggle laughed and appeared pleased with the compliment; and I wished I had even laid it on a little thicker.

"Well, Mogul, what are our great forefathers about? Still pulling to pieces that sublime fabric of a constitution, which has so long been the wonder of the world, and my especial admiration?"

"They are talking of changes, sir, although I believe they have effected no great matter. The primate of all Leaphigh, I had occasion to remark, still has seven joints to his tail."

"Ah! they are a wonderful people, sir!" said Wriggle, looking ruefully at his own bob, which, as I afterward understood, was a mere natural abortion. "I detest change, sir; were I a Leaphigher, I would die in my tail!"

"One for whom nature has done so much in this way is to be excused a little enthusiasm."

"A most miraculous people, sir—the wonder of the world—and their institutions are the greatest prodigy of the times!"

"That is well remarked, Wriggle," put in the brigadier; "for they have been tinkering them, and altering them, any time these five hundred and fifty years, and still they remain precisely the same!"

"Very true, brigadier, very true—the marvel of our times! But, gentlemen, what do you indeed think of us? I shall not let you off with generalities. You have now been long enough on shore to have formed some pretty distinct notions about us, and I confess I should be glad to hear them. Speak the truth with candor—are we not most miserable, forlorn, disreputable devils, after all?"

I disclaimed the ability to judge of the social condition of a people on so short an acquaintance; but to this Mr. Wriggle would not listen. He insisted that I must have been particularly disgusted with the coarseness and want of refinement in the rabble, as he called the mass, who, by the way, had already struck me as being relatively much the better part of the population, so far as I had seen things!—more than commonly decent, quiet and civil. Mr. Wriggle, also, very earnestly and piteously begged I would not judge of the whole country by such examples as I might happen to fall in with in the highways.

"I trust, Mogul, you will have charity enough to believe we are not all of us quite so bad as appearances, no doubt, make us in your polished eyes. These rude beings are spoiled by our jacobinical laws; but we have a class, sir, that *is* different. But, if you will not touch on the people, how do you like the town, sir? A poor place, no doubt, after your own ancient capitals?"

"Time will remedy all that, Mr. Wriggle."

"Do you then think we really want time?—now, that house at the corner, there, to my taste is fit for a gentleman in any country—eh?"

"No doubt, sir; fit for one."

"This is but a poor street in the eyes of you travelers, I know, this Widepath of ours; though we think it rather sublime?"

"You do yourself injustice, Mr. Wriggle—though not equal to many of the—"

"How, sir, the Widepath not equal to anything on earth! I know several people who have been in the old world"—so the Leaplowers call the region of Leaphigh, Leapup, Leapdown, etc.—"and they swear there is not as fine a street in any part of it. I have not had the good fortune to travel, sir; but, sir, permit me, sir, to say, sir, that some of them, sir, that *have* traveled, sir, think, sir, the Widepath, sir, the most magnificent public avenue, sir, that their experienced eyes ever beheld, sir—yes, sir, that their experienced eyes ever beheld, sir."

"I have seen so little of it, as yet, Mr. Wriggle, that you will pardon me if I have spoken hastily."

"Oh! no offense—I despise the monikin who is not above local vanities and provincial admiration! You ought to have seen that, sir, for I frankly admit, sir, that no rabble can be worse than ours, and that we are all going to the devil as fast as ever we can. No, sir, a most miserable rabble, sir. But as for this street, and our houses, and our cats, and our dogs, and certain exceptions—you understand me, sir—it is quite a different thing. Pray, Mogul, who is the greatest personage, now, in your nation?"

"Perhaps I ought to say the Duke of Wellington, sir."

"Well, sir, allow me to ask if he lives in a better house than that before us? I see you are delighted, eh? We are a poor, new nation of pitiful traders, sir, half-savage, as everybody knows; but we *do* flatter ourselves that we know how to build a house! Will you just step in and see a new sofa that its owner bought only yesterday—I know him intimately, and nothing gives me so much pleasure as to show his new sofa."

I declined the invitation on the plea of fatigue, and by this means got rid of so troublesome an acquaintance. On leaving me, however, he begged that I would not fail to make his house my home, swore terribly at the rabble, and invited me to admire a very ordinary view that was to be obtained by looking up the Widepath in a particular direction, but which embraced his own abode. When Mr. Wriggle was fairly out of ear-shot, I demanded of the brigadier if Bivouac or Leaplow contained many such prodigies.

"Enough to make themselves very troublesome, and us ridiculous," returned Mr. Downright. "We are a young nation, Sir John, covering a great surface with a comparatively small population, and, as you are aware, separated from the other parts of the monikin region by a belt of ocean. In some respects we are like people in the country, and we possess the merits and failings of those who are so situated. Perhaps no nation has a larger share of reflecting and essentially respectable inhabitants than Leaplow; but, not satisfied with being what circumstances so admirably fit them to be, there is a *clique* among us who, influenced by the greater authority of older nations, pine to be that which nature, education, manners, nor faculties, will just yet allow them to become. In short, sir, we have the besetting sin of a young community—imitation. In our case the imitation is not always happy, either; it being necessarily an imitation that is founded on descriptions. If the evil were limited to mere social absurdities, it might be laughed at—but that inherent desire of distinction, which is the most morbid and irritable, unhappily, in the minds of those who are the least able to attain anything more than a very vulgar notoriety, is just as active here as it is elsewhere; and some who have got wealth, and who can never get more than what is purely dependent on wealth, affect to despise those who are not as fortunate as themselves in this particular. In their longings for pre-eminence they turn to other states—Leaphigh more especially, which is the *beau ideal* of all nations and people who wish to set up a caste in opposition to despotism—for rules of thought, and declaim against that very mass which is at the bottom of all their prosperity, by obstinately refusing to allow of any essential innovation on the common rights. In addition to these social pretenders, we have our political indoctrinated."

"Indoctrinated! Will you explain the meaning of the term?"

"Sir, an indoctrinated is one of a political school who holds to the validity of certain theories which have been made to justify a set of adventitious facts, as is eminently the case in our own great model, Leaphigh. We are peculiarly placed in this country. Here, as a rule, facts—meaning political and social facts—are greatly in advance of opinion, simply because the former are left chiefly to their own free actions, and the latter is necessarily trammeled by habit and prejudice; while in the 'old region' opinion as a rule, and meaning the leading or better opinion, is greatly in advance of facts, because facts are restrained by usage and personal interests, and opinion is incited by study, aud the necessity of change."

"Permit me to say, brigadier, that I find your present institution a remarkable result to follow such a state of things."

"They are a cause, rather than a consequence. Opinion, as a whole, is everywhere on the advance; and it is further advanced, even here, *as a whole*, than anywhere else. Accident has favored the foundation of the social compact; and once founded, the facts have been hastening to their consummation faster than the monikin mind has been able to keep company with them. This is a remarkable but true state of the whole region. In other monikin countries, you see opinion tugging at rooted practices, and making desperate efforts to eradicate them from their bed of vested interests, while here you see facts dragging opinion after them, like a tail wriggling behind a kite.* As to our purely social imitations and social follies, absurd as they are, they are necessarily confined to a small and an immaterial class; but the *indoctrinated* spirit is a much more serious affair. That unsettles confidence, innovates on the right, often innocently and ignorantly, and causes the vessel of state to sail like a ship with a drag towing in her wake."

"This is truly a novel condition for an enlightened monikin nation."

"No doubt men manage better; but of all this you will learn more in the great council. You may, perhaps, think it strange that our facts should preserve their ascendency in opposition to so powerful a foe as opinion; but you will remember that a great majority of our people, if not absolutely on a level with circumstances, being purely practical, are much nearer to this level, than the class termed the indoctrinated. The last are troublesome and delusive, rather than overwhelming."

"To return to Mr. Wriggle—is his sect numerous?"

"His class flourishes most in the towns. In Leaplow we are greatly in want of a capital, where the cultivated, educated, and well-mannered can assemble, and placed by their habits and tastes above the ordinary motives and feelings of the less instructed, they might form a more healthful, independent, appropriate, and manly public sentiment than that which now pervades the country. As things are, the real *élite* of this community are so scattered, as rather to receive an impression *from* than to impart one *to* society. The Leaplow Wriggles, as you have just witnessed, are selfish and exacting as to their personal pretensions, irritably confident as to the merit of any particular excellence which limits their own experience, and furiously proscribing to those whom they fancy less fortunate than themselves."

"Good heavens!—brigadier—all this is excessively human!"

"Ah! it is—is it? Well, this is certainly the way with us monikins. Our Wriggles are ashamed of exactly that portion of our population of which they have most reason to be proud, viz., the mass; and they are proud of precisely that portion of which they have most reason to be ashamed, viz., themselves. But plenty of opportunities will offer to look

* One would think that Brigadier Downright had lately paid a visit to our own happy and much enlightened land. Fifty years since, the negro was a slave in New York, and incapable of contracting marriage with a white. Facts have, however, been progressive; and, from one privilege to another, he has at length obtained that of consulting his own tastes in this matter, and so far as he himself is concerned, of doing as he pleases. This is the *fact;* but he who presume to *speak* of it has his windows broken by *opinion*, for his pains!—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

further into this; and we will now hasten to the inn."

As the brigadier appeared to chafe under the subject, I remained silent, following him as fast as I could, but keeping my eyes open, the reader may be very sure, as we went along. There was one peculiarity I could not but remark in this singular town. It was this:—all the houses were smeared over with some colored earth, and, then, after all this pains had been taken to cover the material, an artist was employed to make white marks around every separate particle of the fabric (and they were in millions), which ingenious particularity gives the dwelling a most agreeable air of detail, imparting to the architecture in general, a sublimity that is based on the multiplication table. If to this be added the black of the *chevaux-de-frise*, the white of the entrance ladders, and a sort of standing-collar to the whole, immediately under the eyes, of some very dazzling hue, the effect is not unlike that of a platoon of drummers in scarlet coats, cotton lace, and cuffs and capes of white. What renders the similitude more striking is the fact that no two of the same platoon appear to be exactly of a size, as is very apt to be the case with your votaries in military music.

CHAPTER XXV.

A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE, A FUNDAMENTAL LAW, AND A FUNDAMENTAL ERROR.

THE people of Leaplow are remarkable for the deliberation of their acts, the moderation of their views, and the accumulation of their wisdom. As a matter of course, such a people is never in an indecent haste. Although I have now been legally naturalized, and regularly elected to the great council fully twenty-four hours, three entire days were allowed for the study of the institutions, and to become acquainted with the genius of a nation, who, according to their own account of the matter, have no parallel in heaven or earth, or in the waters under the earth, before I was called upon to exercise my novel and important functions. I profited by the delay, and shall seize a favorable moment to make the reader acquainted with some of my acquisitions on this interesting topic.

The institutions of Leaplow are divided into two great moral categories, viz.: the *legal* and the *substitutive*. The former embraces the provisions of the great *elementary*, and the latter all the provisions of the great *alimentary* principle. The first, accordingly, is limited by the constitution, or the Great National Allegory, while the last is limited by nothing but practice; one contains the proposition, and the other its deductions; this is all hypothesis, that, all corollary. The two great political landmarks, the two public opinions, the bob-upon-bobs, the rotatory action, and the great and little wheels, are merely inferential, and I shall, therefore, say nothing about them in my present treatise, which has a strict relation only to the fundamental law of the land, or to the Great and Sacred National Allegory.

It has been already stated that Leaplow was originally a scion of Leaphigh. The political separation took place in the last generation, when the Leaplowers publicly renounced Leaphigh and all it contained, just as your catechumen is made to renounce the devil and all his works. The renunciation, which is also sometimes called the *denunciation*, was much more to the liking of Leaplow than to that of Leaphigh; and a long and sanguinary war was the consequence. The Leaplowers, after a smart struggle, however, prevailed in their firm determination to have no more to do with Leaphigh. The sequel will show how far they were right.

Even preceding the struggle, so active was the sentiment of patriotism and independence, that the citizens of Leaplow, though ill provided with the productions of their own industry, proudly resorted to the self-denial of refusing to import even a pin from the mother country, actually preferring nakedness to submission. They even solemnly voted that their venerable progenitor, instead of be-

ing, as she clearly ought to have been, a fond, protecting, and indulgent parent, was, in truth, no other than a rapacious, vindictive and tyrannical stepmother. This was the opinion, it will be remembered, when the two communities were legally united, had but one head, wore clothes, and necessarily pursued a multitude of their interests in common.

By the lucky termination of the war, all this was radically changed. Leaplow pointed her thumb at Leaphigh, and declared her intention henceforth to manage her own affairs in her own way. In order to do this the more effectually, and, at the same time, to throw dirt into the countenance of her late stepmother, she determined that her own polity should run so near a parallel, and yet should be so obviously an improvement on that of Leaphigh, as to demonstrate the imperfections of the latter to the most superficial observer. That this patriotic resolution was faithfully carried out in practice, I am now about to demonstrate.

In Leaphigh, the old human principle had long prevailed, that political authority came from God; though why such a theory should ever have prevailed anywhere, as Mr. Downright once expressed it, I cannot see, the devil very evidently having a greater agency in its exercise than any other influence, or intelligence whatever. However, the *jus divinum* was the regulator of the Leaphigh social compact, until the nobility managed to get the better of the *jus*, when the *divinum* was left to shift for itself. It was at this epocha the present constitution found its birth. Any one may have observed that one stick placed on end will fall, as a matter of course, unless rooted in the earth. Two sticks fare no better even with their tops united; but three sticks form a standard. This simple and beautiful idea gave rise to the Leaphigh polity. Three moral props were erected in the midst of the community, at the foot of one of which was placed the king, to prevent it from slipping; for all the danger, under such a system, came from that of the base slipping; at the foot of the second, the nobles; and at the foot of the third, the people. On the summit of this tripod was raised the machine of state. This was found to be a capital invention in theory, though practice, as practice is very apt to do, subjected it to some essential modifications. The king, having his stick all his own way, gave a great deal of trouble to the two other sets of stickholders; and, unwilling to disturb the theory, for that was deemed to be irrevocably settled and sacred, the nobility, who for their own particular convenience, paid the principal workmen at the base of the people's stick to stand steady, set about the means of keeping the king's stick, also, in a more uniform and serviceable attitude.

It was on this occasion that, discovering the king never could keep his end of the great social stick in the place where he had sworn to keep it, they solemnly declared that he must have forgotten where the constitutional foothole was, and that he had irretrievably lost his memory—a decision that was the remote cause of the recent calamity of Captain Poke. The king was no sooner constitutionally deprived of his memory, than it was an easy matter to strip him of all his other faculties; after which it was humanely decreed, as indeed it ought to be in the case of a being so destitute that he could do no wrong. By way of following out the idea on a humane and Christian-like principle, and in order to make one part of the practice conform to the other, it was shortly after determined that he should do nothing; his eldest first cousin of the masculine gender being legally proclaimed his substitute. In the end, the crimson curtain was drawn before the throne. As, however, this cousin might begin to wriggle the stick in his turn, and derange the balance of the tripod, the other two sets of stickholders next decided that, though his majesty had an undeniable constitutional right to say who *should be* his eldest first cousin of the masculine gender, they had an undoubted constitutional right to say who he *should not be*. The result of all this was a compromise; his majesty, who, like other people, found the sweets of authority

more palatable than the bitter, agreeing to get up on top of the tripod, where he might appear seated on the machine of state to receive salutations, and eat and drink in peace, leaving the others to settle among themselves who should do the work at the bottom as well as they could. In brief, such is the history and such was the polity of Leaphigh when I had the honor of visiting that country.

The Leaplowers were resolute to prove that all this was radically wrong. They determined, in the first place, that there should be but one great social beam; and, in order that it should stand perfectly steady, they made it the duty of every citizen to prop its base. They liked the idea of a tripod well enough, but, instead of setting one up in the Leaphigh fashion, they just reversed its form, and stuck it on top of their beam, legs uppermost, placing a separate agent on each leg, to work their machine of state; taking care, also, to send a new one aloft periodically. They reasoned thus: If one of the Leaphigh beams slip—and they will be very apt to slip in wet weather, with the king, nobles, and people wriggling and shoving against each other—down will come the whole machine of state, or, to say the least, it will get so much awry as never to work as well as at first; and therefore we will have none of it. If, on the other hand, one of our agents makes a blunder and falls, why, he will only break his own neck. He will, moreover, fall in the midst of us, and, should he escape with life, we can either catch him and throw him back again, or we can send a better hand up in his place, to serve out the rest of his time. They also maintain that one beam, supported by all the citizens, is much less likely to slip than three beams, supported by three powers of very uncertain, not to say unequal, forces.

Such, in effect, is the substance of the respective national allegories of Leaphigh and of Leaplow; I say allegories, for both governments seem to rely on this ingenious form of exhibiting their great distinctive national sentiments. It would, in fact, be an improvement, were all constitutions henceforth to be written in this manner, since they would necessarily be more explicit, intelligible, and sacred than they are by the present attempt at literality.

Having explained the governing principles of these two important states, I now crave the reader's attention for a moment, while I go a little into the details of the *modus operandi*, in both cases.

Leaphigh acknowledged a principle, in the outset, that Leaplow totally disclaimed, viz., that of primogeniture. Being an only child myself, and having no occasion for research on this interesting subject, I never knew the basis of this peculiar right, until I came to read the great Leaphigh commentator, Whiterock, on the governing rules of the social compact. I there found that the first born, *morally* considered, is thought to have better claims to the honors of the genealogical tree, on the father's side, than those offspring whose origin is to be referred to a later period in connubial life. On this obvious and highly discriminating principle, the crown, the rights of the nobles, and indeed all other rights, are transferred from father to son, in the direct male line, according to primogeniture.

Nothing of this is practiced in Leaplow. There, the supposition of legitimacy is as much in favor of the youngest as of the oldest born, and the practice is in conformity. As there is no hereditary chief to poise on one of the legs of the great tripod, the people at the foot of the beam choose one from among themselves, periodically, who is called the great sachem. The same people choose another set, few in number, who occupy a common seat, on another leg. These they term the riddles. Another set, still more numerous and popular in aspect, if not in fact, fills a large seat on the third leg. These last, from their being supposed to be supereminently popular and disinterested, are familiarly known as the legion. They are also pleasantly nicknamed the bobees, an appellation that took its rise in the circumstances that most of the members of their body have submitted to the second dock, and, indeed, have nearly obliterated

every sign of a *cauda*. I had, most luckily, been chosen to sit in the house of bobees, a station for which I felt myself well qualified, in this great essential at least; for all the anointing and forcing resorted to by Noah and myself, during our voyage out, and our residence in Leaphigh, had not produced so much as a visible sprout in either.

The great sachem, the riddles, and the legion, had conjoint duties to perform, in certain respects, and separate duties in others. All three, as they owed their allegorical elevation to, so were they dependent on, the people at the foot of the great social stick, for approbation and reward—that is to say for all rewards other than those which they have it in their power to bestow on themselves. There was another authority, or agent of the public, that is equally perched on the social beam, though not quite so dependent as the three just named, upon the main prop of the people—being also propped by a mechanical disposition of the tripod itself. These are termed the supreme arbitrators, and their duties are to revise the acts of the other three agents of the people, and to decide whether they are or are not in conformity with the recognized principles of the sacred allegory.

I was greatly delighted with my own progress in the study of the Leaplow institutions. In the first place, I soon discovered that the principal thing was to reverse the political knowledge I had acquired in Leaphigh, as one would turn a tub upside down, when he wished to draw from its stores at a fresh end, and then I was pretty sure of being within at least the spirit of the Leaplow law. Everything seemed simple, for all was dependent on the common prop, at the base of the great social beam.

Having got a thorough insight myself, into the governing principles of the system under which I had been chosen to serve, I went to look up my colleague, Captain Poke, in order to ascertain how he understood the great Leaplow allegory.

I found the mind of the sealer, according to a beautiful form of speech already introduced in this narrative, "considerably exercised," on the several subjects that so naturally presented themselves to a man in his situation. In the first place, he was in a towering passion at the impudence of Bob in presuming to offer himself as a candidate for the great council; and having offered himself, the rage of the captain was in no degree abated by the circumstance of the young rascal's being at the head of the poll. He most unreservedly swore "that no subordinate of his should ever sit in the same legislative body with himself; that he was a republican by birth, and knew the usages of republican governments quite as well as the best patriot among them; and although he admitted that all sorts of critters were sent to Congress in his country, no man ever knew of an instance of a cabin-boy's being sent there. They might elect just as much as they pleased; but coming ashore, and playing politician, were very different things from cleaning his boots, and making his coffee, and mixing his grog." The captain had just been waited on by a committee of the perpendiculars (half the Leaplow community is on some committee or other), by whom he had been elected, and they had given notice, that instructions would be sent in, forthwith, to all their representatives, to perform gyration No. 3, as sooner after the meeting of the council as possible. He was no tumbler, and he had sent for a master of political saltation, who had just been with him practicing. According to Noah's own statement, his success was anything but flattering. "If they would give a body room, Sir John," he said, in a complaining accent, "I should think nothing of it—but you are expected to stand shoulder to shoulder—yard-arm and yard-arm—and throw a flap-jack as handy as an old woman would toss a johnny-cake! It's unreasonable to think of wearing ship without room; but give me room, and I'll engage to get round on the other tack, and to luff into the line again, as safely as the oldest cruiser among 'em, though not quite so quick. They do go about spitefully, that's sartain!"

Nor were the grand national alle-

gories without their difficulties. Noah perfectly understood the images of the two tripods, though he was disposed to think that neither was properly secured. A mast would make but bad weather, he maintained, let it be ever so well rigged and stay'd, without being also securely stepped. He saw no use in trusting the heels of the beams to anybody. Good lashings were what were wanted, and then the people might go about their private affairs, and not fear the work would fall. That the king of Leaphigh had no memory, he could testify from bitter experience; nor did he believe he had any conscience; and chiefly he desired to know if we, when we got up into our places on the top of the three inverted beams, among the other bobees, were to make war on the great sachem and the riddles, or whether we were to consider the whole affair as a good thing, in which the wisest course would be to make fair weather of it?

To all these remarks and questions, I answered as well as my own limited experience would allow; taking care to inform my friend that he had conceived the whole matter a little too literally, as all that he had been reading about the great political beams, the tripods, and the legislative boxes, was merely an allegory.

"And pray, then, Sir John, what may an allegory be?"

"In this case, my good sir, it is a constitution."

"And what is a constitution?"

"Why it is sometimes, as you perceive, an allegory."

"And are we not to be mast-headed, then, according to the book?"

"Figuratively, only."

"But there are actually such critters as the great sachem, and riddles, and, above all, the bobees! We are boney fiddiddle-di-dee elected!"

"Boney fie-diddle-di-dee."

"And may I take the liberty of asking what it is our duty to do?"

"We are to act practically, according to the literality of the legal, implied, figurative, allegorical significations of the great national compact under a legitimate construction."

"I fear we shall have to work double tides, Sir John, to do so much in so short a time! Do you mean that, in honest truth, there is no beam?"

"There is, and there is not."

"No fore, main, and mizzen-tops, according to what is here written down?"

"There is not, and there is."

"Sir John, in the name of God, speak out! Is all this about eight dollars a day no better than a take-in?"

"That, I believe, is strictly literal."

As Noah now seemed a little mollified, I seized the opportunity to tell him he must beware how he attempted to stop Bob from attending the council. Members were privileged, going and coming; and unless he was guarded in his course, he might have some unpleasant collision with the sergeant-at-arms. Besides, it was unbecoming the dignity of a legislator to be wrangling about trifles, and he to whom was confided the great affairs of a state, ought to attach the utmost importance to a grave exterior, which commonly was of more account with his constituents than any other quality. Any one could tell whether he was grave or not, but it was by no means so easy a matter to tell whether he or his constituents had the greatest cause to appear so. Noah promised to be discreet, and we parted, not to meet again until we assembled to be sworn in.

Before continuing the narrative, I will just mention that we disposed of our commercial investments that morning. All the Leaphigh opinions brought good prices; and I had occasion to see how well the brigadier understood the market, by the eagerness with which, in particular, the opinions on the state of society in Leaplow were bought up. But, by one of those unexpected windfalls which raise up so many of the chosen of the earth to their high places, the cook did better than any of us. It will be remembered that he had bartered an article of merchandise that he called slush against a neglected bale of Distinctive Leaplow Opinions, which had no success at all in Leaphigh. Coming as

they did from abroad, these articles had taken as a novelty in Bivouac, and he sold them all before night, at enormous advances; the cry being that something new and extraordinary had found its way into the market.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW TO ENACT LAWS—ORATORY, LOGIC, AND ELOQUENCE, ALL CONSIDERED IN THEIR EVERY-DAY ASPECTS.

POLITICAL oaths are very much the same sort of thing everywhere, and I shall say no more about our inauguration than simply to state it took place as usual. The two Houses were duly organized, and we proceeded, without delay, to the transaction of business. I will here state that I was much rejoiced to find Brigadier Downright among the bobees, the captain whispering that most probably he had been mistaken for an "immigrant," and chosen accordingly.

It was not a great while before the great sachem sent us a communication, which contained a *compte rendu* of the state of the nation. Like most accounts it is my good fortune to receive, I thought it particularly long. Agreeably to the opinions of this document, the people of Leaplow were, by a good deal, the happiest people in the world: they were also considerably more respected, esteemed, beloved, honored, and properly appreciated, than any other monikin community; and, in short, they were the admiration and glory of the universe. I was exceedingly glad to hear this, for some of the facts were quite new to me: a circumstance which shows one can never get correct notions of a nation except from itself.

These important facts properly digested, we all of us set about our several duties with a zeal that spoke fairly for our industry and integrity. Things commenced swimmingly, and it was not long before the riddles sent us a resolution for concurrence, by way of opening the ball. It was conceived in the following terms: "*Resolved*, That the color which has hitherto been deemed to be black, is really white."

As this was the first resolution that involved a principle on which we had been required to vote, I suggested to Noah the propriety of our going round to the brigadier, and inquiring what might be the drift of so singular a proposition. Our colleague answered the question with great good-nature, giving us to understand that the perpendiculars and the horizontals had long been at variance on the mere coloring property of various important questions, and the real matter involved in the resolution was not visible. The former had always maintained (by always he meant ever since the time they maintained the contrary) the doctrine of the resolution and the latter its converse. A majority of the riddles, just at this moment, are perpendiculars; and, as it was now seen, they had succeeded in getting a vote on their favorite principle.

"According to this account of the matter, Sir John," observed the captain, "I shall be compelled to maintain that black is white, seeing that I am in on the parpendic'lar interest!"

I thought with the captain, and was pleased that my own legislative debut was not to be characterized by the promulgation of any doctrine so much at variance with my preconceived ways of thinking. Curious, however, to know his opinion, I asked the brigadier in what light he felt disposed to view the matter himself.

"I am elected by the tangents," he said; "and, by what I can learn, it is the intention of our friends to steer a middle course; and one of our leaders is already selected, who, at a proper stage of the affair, is to move an amendment."

"Can you refer me, my dear friend, to anything connected with the Great National Allegory that bears on this point?"

"Why, there is a clause among the fundamental and immutable laws, which it is thought was intended to meet this very case; but, unhappily, the sages by whom our Allegory was draw up have not paid quite as much attention to the phraseology as the importance of the subject demanded."

Here the brigadier laid his finger on the clause in question, and I returned to a seat to study its meaning. It was conceived as follows:—Art. IV., Clause 6: The great national council shall, in no case whatever, pass any law, or resolution, declaring white to be black."

After studying this fundamental enactment to the bottom, turning it on every side and finally considering it upside-down, I came to the conclusion that its tenor was, on the whole, rather more favorable than unfavorable to the horizontal doctrine. It struck me, a very good argument was to be made out of the constitutional question, and that it presented a very fair occasion for a new member to venture on a maiden speech. Having so settled the matter, entirely to my own satisfaction, I held myself in reserve, waiting for the proper moment to produce an effect.

It was not long before the chairman of the committee on the judiciary (one of the effects of the resolution was entirely to change the coloring of all testimony throughout the vast republic of Leaplow) made his report on the subject-matter of the resolution. This person was a tangent, who had a besetting wish to become a riddle, although the leaning of our house was decidedly horizontal; and, as a matter of course, he took the riddle side of this question. The report, itself, required seven hours in the reading, commencing with the subject at the epocha of the celebrated caucus that was adjourned *sine die*, by the disruption of the earth's crust, and previously to the distribution of the great monikin family into separate communities, and ending with the subject of the resolution in his hand. The reporter had set his political palette with the utmost care, having completely covered the subject with neutral tints, before he got through with it, and glazing the whole down with ultramarine, in such a way as to cause the eye to regard the matter through a fictitious atmosphere. Finally, he repeatcd the resolution, *verbatim*, and as it came from the other house.

Mr. Speaker now called upon the gentlemen to deliver their sentiments. To my utter amazement, Captain Poke arose, put his tobacco back into his box, and opened the debate without apology.

The honorable captain said he understood this question to be one implicating the liberties of everybody. He understood the matter literally, as it was propounded in the allegory, and set forth in the resolution; and, as such, he intended to look at it with unprejudiced eyes. "The natur' of this proposal lay altogether in color. What is color, after all? Make the most of it, and in the most favorable position, which, perhaps, is the cheek of a comely young woman, and it is but skin-deep. He remembered the time when a certain female in another part of the universe, who is commonly called Miss Poke, might have out-rosed the best rose in a place called Stunnin'-tun; and what did it all amount to? He shouldn't ask Miss Poke herself, for obvious reasons—but he would ask any of the neighbors how she looked now? Quitting female natur', he would come to human natur' generally. He had often remarked that sea-water was blue, and he had frequently caused pails to be lowered, and the water brought on deck, to see if he could come at any of this bluing matter—for indigo was both scarce and dear in his part of the world, but he never could make out anything by the experiment; from which he concluded that, on the whull, there was pretty much no such thing as color, at all.

"As for the resolution before the house, it depended entirely on the meaning of words. Now, after all, what is a word? Why, some people's words are good, and other people's words are good for nothing. For his part, he liked sealed instruments —which might be because he was a sealer —but as for mere words, he set but little store by them. He once tuck a man's word for his wages; and the long and short of it was, that he lost his money. He had known a thousand instances in which words had proved to be of no value, and he did not see why some gentlemen wished to make them of so much importance here. For his part, he was for puffing up nothing, no, not even a word or a

color, above its desarts. The people seemed to call for a change in the color of things, and he called upon gentlemen to remember that this was a free country, and one in which the laws ruled; and therefore he trusted they would be disposed to adapt the laws to the wants of the people. What had the people asked of the house in this matter? So far as his knowledge went, they had really asked nothing in words, but he understood there was great discontent on the subject of the old colors; and he construed their silence into an expression of contempt for words in general. He was a parpendic'lar, and he should always maintain parpendic'lar sentiments. Gentlemen might not agree with him, but, for one, he was not disposed to jipordyze the liberties of his constituents, and therefore he gave the rizolution just as it came from the riddles, without altering a letter—although he did think there was one word misspelt—he meant 'really,' which he had been taught to spell 'ra'ally'—but he was ready to sacrifice even his opinions on this point to the good of the country; and therefore he went with the riddles, even to their misprints. He hoped the rizolution would pass, with the entire unanimity so important a subject demanded."

This speech produced a very strong sensation. Up to this time, the principal orators of the House had been much in the practice of splitting hairs about some nice technicality in the Great Allegory; but Noah, with the simplicity of a truly great mind, had made a home thrust at the root of the whole manner; laying about him with the single-heartedness of the illustrious Manchechan, when he couched his lance against the wind-mills. The points admitted, that there were no such things as colors, and that words were of no moment, this, or indeed any other resolution, might be passed with impunity. The perpendiculars in the House were singularly satisfied, for, to say the truth, their arguments hitherto had been rather flimsy. Out of doors, the effects was greater still; for it wrought a complete change in the whole tenor of the perpendicular argument. Monikins who the day before had strenuously affirmed that their strength lay in the phraseology of the Great Allegory, now suddenly had their eyes opened, clearly perceiving that words had no just value. The argument had certainly undergone some modifications; but, luckily, the deduction was undisturbed. The brigadier noticed this apparent anomaly; explaining, however, that it was quite common in Leaplow, more especially in all matters affecting politics; though he felt persuaded men must be more consistent.

No great time is required to put a well-organized political corps to the right-about, when proper attention has been paid to the preparatory drills. Although several of the best speakers among the perpendiculars had appeared in their places, with ample notes, and otherwise in readiness to show that the phraseology of the resolution was altogether in favor of their views of the question, every monikin of them promptly rejected his previous argument for the simple and more conclusive views of Captain Poke. On the other hand the horizontals were so completely taken by surprise, that not an orator among them all had a word to say for himself. So far from replying, they actually permitted one of their antagonists to rise and to follow up the blow of the captain; a pretty certain sign that they were bothered.

The new speaker was a very prominent leader of the perpendiculars. He was one of those politicians who are only the more dexterous from having been of all sides, knowing by experience the weak and the strong points of each, and being familiar with every subdivision of political sentiment that had ever existed in the country. This ingenious orator took up the subject with spirit, treating it throughout on the principle of the honorable member who had last spoken. According to his views of the question, the *gist* of a resolution, or a law, was to be found in things and not in words. Words were so many false lights to mislead, and —he need not tell this House a fact that was familiar to all who heard him—words

would be, and were, daily molded to suit the convenience of all sorts of persons. It was a capital error in political life to be lavish of words, for the time might come when the garrulous and voluble would have cause to repent of having used them. He asked the House if the *thing* proposed were necessary—did the public interests require it—was the public mind prepared for it; if so, he begged gentlemen to do their duty to themselves, their characters, their consciences, their religion, their property, and lastly, their constituents.

This orator had endeavored to destroy words by words, and I thought the house regarded his effort rather favorably. I now determined to make a rally in favor of the fundamental law, which evidently had as yet been but little regarded in the discussion. I caught the speaker's eye, accordingly, and was on my feet in a moment.

I commenced by paying elaborate compliments to the talents and motives of those who had preceded me, and made some proper allusions to the known intelligence, patriotism, virtue, and legal attainments of the House. All this was so well received that, taking courage, I determined to come down upon my adversaries at once, with the text of the written law. Prefacing the blow with an eulogium on the admirable nature of those institutions which were universally admitted to be the wonder of the world, and which were commonly pronounced to be the second perfection of monikin reason, those of Leaphigh being invariably deemed the first, I made a few apposite remarks on the necessity of respecting the vital ordinances of the body politic, and asked the attention of my hearers while I read to them a particular clause, which it had struck me had some allusion to the very point now in consideration. Having thus cleared the way, I had not the folly to defeat the objects of so much preparation, by an indiscreet precipitancy. So far from it, previously to reading the extract from the constitution, I waited until the attention of every member present was attracted more forcibly by the dignity, deliberation, and gravity of my manner, than by the substance of what had yet been said. In the midst of this deep silence and expectation I read aloud, in a voice that reached every cranny in the hall—"The great council shall, in no case whatever, pass any law, or resolution, declaring white to be black."

If I had been calm in the presentation of this authority, I was equally self-possessed in waiting for its effect. Looking about me, I saw surprise, perplexity, doubt, wonder and uncertainty, in every countenance, if I did not find conviction. One fact embarrassed even me. Our friends the horizontals were evidently quite as much at fault as our opponents the perpendiculars, instead of being, as I had good reason to hope, in an ecstasy of pleasure on hearing their cause sustained by an authority so weighty.

"Will the honorable member have the goodness to explain from what author he has quoted?" one of the leading perpendiculars at length ventured to inquire.

"The language you have just heard, Mr. Speaker," I resumed, believing that now was the favorable instant to follow up the matter, "is language that must find an echo in every heart—it is language that can never be used in vain in this venerable hall, language that carries with it conviction and command"—I observed that the members were now fairly gaping at each other with wonder. "Sir, I am asked to name the author from whom I have quoted these sententious and explicit words—sir, what you have just heard is to be found in the Article IV., Clause 6, of the Great National Allegory—"

"Order—order—order!" shouted a hundred raven throats.

I stood aghast, even more amazed than the House itself had been only the instant before.

"Order—order—order—order—order!" continued to be yelled, as if a million of demons were screeching in the hall.

"The honorable member will please to recollect," said the bland and ex-officio impartial Speaker, who, by the way, was a perpendicular, elected by fraud, "that it is out of order to use personalities."

"Personalities! I do not understand, sir—"

"The instrument to which the honorable member has alluded, his own good sense will tell him, was never written by itself—so far from this, the very members of the convention by which it was drawn up are at this instant members of this House, and most of them supporters of the resolution now before the House; and it will be deemed personal to throw into their faces former official acts, in this unheard-of manner. I am sorry it is my duty to say, that the honorable member is entirely out of order."

"But, sir, the sacred national—"

"Sacred, sir, beyond a doubt—but in a sense different from what you imagine—much too sacred, sir, ever to be alluded to here. There are the works of the commentators, the books of constructions, and especially the writings of various foreign and perfectly disinterested statesmen—need I name Ekrub in particular!—that are at the command of members; but so long as I am honored with a seat in this chair, I shall peremptorily decide against all personalities."

I was dumfounded. The idea that the authority itself would be refused never crossed my mind, though I had anticipated a sharp struggle on its construction. The constitution only required that no law should be passed declaring black to be white, whereas the resolution merely ordered that henceforth white should be black. Here was matter for discussion, nor was I at all sanguine as to the result; but to be thus knocked on the head by a club, in the outset, was too much for the modesty of a maiden speech. I took my seat in confusion; and I plainly saw that the perpendiculars, by their sneers, now expected to carry everything triumphantly their own way. This, most probably, would have been the case, had not one of the tangents immediately got the floor, to move the amendment.

To the vast indignation of Captain Poke, and, in some degree, to my own mortification, this duty was intrusted to the Hon. Robert Smut. Mr. Smut commenced with entreating members not to be led away by the sophistry of the first speaker. That honorable member, no doubt, felt himself called upon to defend the position taken by his friends; but those that knew him well, as it had been his fate to know him, must be persuaded that his sentiments had, at least, undergone a sudden and miraculous change. That honorable member denied the existenee of color, at all! He would ask that honorable member if he had never been instrumental himself in producing what is generally called "black and blue color?" he should like to know if that honorable member placed as little value, at present, on blows as he now seemed to set on words—he begged pardon of the House, but this was a matter of great interest to himself—he knew that there never had been a greater manufacturer of "black and blue color" than that honorable member, and he wondered at his now so pertinaciously denying the existence of colors, and at his wish to underrate their value. For his part, he trusted he understood the importance of words, and the value of hues; and while he did not exactly see the necessity of deeming black so inviolable as some gentlemen appeared to think it, he was not by any means prepared to go so far as those who had introduced this resolution. He did not believe that public opinion was satisfied with maintaining that black was black, but he thought it was not yet disposed to affirm that black was white. He did not say that such a day might not arrive; he only maintained that it had not yet arrived, and with a view to meet that which he believed was the public sentiment, he should move, by way of amendment, to strike out the whole of the resolution after the word "really," and insert that which would cause the whole resolution to read as follows, viz:

"Resolved, that the color which has hitherto been deemed to be black, is really *lead-color*."

Hereupon, the Honorable Mr. Smut took his seat, leaving the House to its own ruminations.

The leaders of the perpendiculars, foreseeing that if they got half way this session, they might effect the rest of their object the next, determined to accept

the compromise; and the resolution, as amended, passed by a handsome majority. So this important point was finally decided for the moment, leaving great hopes among the perpendiculars of being able to lay the horizontals even flatter on their backs than they were just then.

The next question that presented itself was of far less interest, exciting no great attention. To understand it, however, it will be necessary to refer a little to history. The government of Leapthrough had, about sixty-three years before, caused one hundred and twenty-six Leaplow ships to be burned on the high seas, or otherwise destroyed. The pretense was, that they incommoded Leapthrough. Leaplow was much too great a nation to submit to so heinous an outrage, while, at the same time, she was much too magnanimous and wise a nation to resent it in an everyday and vulgar manner. Instead of getting in a passion and loading her cannon, she summoned all her logic and began to reason. After reasoning the matter with Leapthrough for fifty-two years, or until all the parties who had been wronged were dead, and could no longer be benefited by her logic, she determined to abate two-thirds of her pretensions in a pecuniary sense, and all her pretensions in an honorary sense and to compromise the affair by accepting a certain insignificant sum of money as a salve to the whole wrong.

Leapthrough conditioned to pay this money, in the most solemn and satisfactory manner; and everybody was delighted with the amicable termination of a very vexatious and a seemingly interminable discussion. Leapthrough was quite as glad to get rid of the matter as Leaplow, and very naturally, under all the circumstances, thought the whole thing at length done with, when she conditioned to pay the money. The great sachem of Leaplow, most unfortunately, however, had "a will of iron," or, in other words, he thought the money ought to be paid as well as conditioned to be paid. This despotic construction of the bargain had given rise to unheard-of dissatisfaction in Leapthrough, as indeed might have been expected; but it was, oddly enough, condemned with some heat even in Leaplow itself, where it was stoutly maintained by certain ingenious logicians, that the only true way to settle a bargain to pay money, was to make a new one for a less sum whenever the amount fell due; a plan that, with a proper moderation and patience would be certain, in time, to extinguish the whole debt.

Several very elaborate patriots had taken this matter in hand, and it was now about to be presented to the House under four different categories. Category No. 1, had the merit of simplicity and precision. It proposed merely that Leaplow should pay the money itself, and take up the bond, using its own funds. Category No. 2, embraced a recommendation of the great sachem for Leaplow to pay itself, using, however, certain funds of Leapthrough. Category 3d, was a proposal to offer ten millions to Leapthrough to say no more about the transaction at all. Category 4th, was to commence the negotiating or abating system mentioned, without delay, in order to extinguish the claim by installments as soon as possible.

The question came up on the consideration of the different projects connected with these four leading principles. My limits will not admit of a detailed history of the debate. All I can do, is merely to give an outline of the logic that these various propositions set in motion, of the legislative ingenuity of which they were the parents, and of the multitude of legitimate conclusions that so naturally followed.

In favor of category No. 1, it was urged that by adopting its leading idea, the affair would be altogether in our own hands, and might consequently be settled with greater attention to purely Leaplow interests; that further delay could only proceed from our own negligence; that no other project was so likely to get rid of this protracted negotiation in so short a time; that by paying the debt with the Leaplow funds, we should be sure of receiving its amount in the good legal currency of the republic; that it would be singularly economical, as the agent who

paid might also be authorized to receive, whereby there would be a saving in salary; and, finally, that under this category, the whole affair might be brought within the limits of a nutshell, and the compass of any one's understanding.

In favor of category No. 2, little more than very equivocal sophisms, which savored strongly of commonplace opinions, were presented. It was pretended, for instance, that he who signed a bond was in equity bound to pay it; that, if he refused, the other party had the natural and legal remedy of compulsion; that it might not always be convenient for a creditor to pay all the obligations of other people which he might happen to hold; that if his transactions were extensive, money might be wanting to carry out such a principle; and that as a precedent, it would comport much more with Leaplow prudence and discretion to maintain the old and tried notions of probity and justice, than to enter on the unknown ocean of uncertainty that was connected with the new opinions, by admitting which, we could never know when we were fairly out of debt.

Category No. 3 was discussed on an entirely new system of logic, which appeared to have great favor with that class of the members who were of the more refined school of ethics. These orators referred the whole matter to a sentiment of honor. They commenced by drawing vivid pictures of the outrages in which the original wrongs had been committed. They spoke of ruined families, plundered mariners, and blasted hopes. They presented minute arithmetical calculations to show that just forty times as much wrong had, in fact, been done, as this bond assumed; and that, as the case actually stood, Leaplow ought, in strict justice, to receive exactly forty times the amount of the money that was actually included in the instrument. Turning from these interesting details, they next presented the question of honor. Leapthrough, by attacking the Leaplow flag, and invading Leaplow rights, had made it principally a question of honor, and, in disposing of it, the principle of honor ought never to be lost sight of. It was honorable to *pay* one's debts—this no one could dispute; but it was not so clear, by any means, that there was any honor in *receiving* one's dues. The national honor was concerned; and they called on members, as they cherished the sacred sentiment, to come forward and sustain it by their votes. As the matter stood, Leaplow had the best of it. In compounding with her creditor, as had been done in the treaty, Leapthrough lost some honor—in refusing to pay the bond, she lost still more; and now, if we should send her the ten millions proposed, and she should have the weakness to accept it, we should fairly get our foot upon her neck, and she could never look us in the face again!

The category No. 4 brought up a member who had made political economy his chief study. This person presented the following case:—According to his calculations, the wrong had been committed precisely sixty-three years and twenty-six days and two-thirds of a day ago. For the whole of that long period Leaplow had been troubled with this vexatious question, which had hung like a cloud over the otherwise unimpaired brightness of the political landscape. It was time to get rid of it. The sum stipulated was just twenty-five millions, to be paid in twenty-five annual installments of a million each. Now, he proposed to reduce the installments to one-half the number, but in no way to change the sum. That point ought to be considered as irrevocably settled. This would diminish the debt one-half. Before the first installment should become due, he would effect a postponement by diminishing the installments again to six, referring the time to the latest periods named in the last treaty, and always most sacredly keeping the sums precisely the same. It would be impossible to touch the sums, which, he repeated, ought to be considered as sacred. Before the expiration of the first seven years, a new arrangement might reduce the installments to two, or even to one—always respecting the sum; and finally, at the proper moment, a treaty could be concluded declaring that there should be

no installment at all, reserving the point, that if there *had* been an installment, Leaplow could never have consented to reduce it below one million. The result would be, that in about five-and-twenty years the country would be fairly rid of the matter, and the national character, which it was agreed on all hands was even now as high as it well could be, would probably be raised many degrees higher. The negotiations had commenced in a spirit of compromise; and our character for consistency required that this spirit of compromise should continue to govern our conduct as long as a single farthing remained unpaid.

This idea took wonderfully; and I do believe it would have passed by a handsome majority had not a new proposition been presented by an orator of singularly pathetic powers.

The new speaker objected to all four of the categories. He said that each and every one of them would lead to war. Leapthrough was a chivalrous and high-minded nation, as was apparent by the present aspect of things. Should we presume to take up the bond, using our own funds, it would mortally offend her pride, and she would fight us; did we presume to take up the bond, using her funds, it would offend her financial system, and she would fight us; did we presume to offer her ten millions to say no more about the matter, it would offend her dignity by intimating that she was to be bought off from her rights, and she would fight us; did we presume to adopt the system of new negotiations, it would mortally offend her honor, by intimating that she would not respect her old negotiations, and she would fight us. He saw war in all four of the categories. He was for a peace category, and he thought he held in his hand a proposition, that by proper management, using the most tender delicacy, and otherwise respecting the sensibilities of the high and honorable nation in question, we might possibly get out of this embarrassing dilemma without actually coming to blows—he said to blows, for he wished to impress on honorable members the penalties of war. He invited gentlemen to recollect that a conflict between two great nations was a serious affair. If Leapthrough were a little nation, it would be a different matter, and the contest might be conducted in a corner; our honor was intimately connected with all we did with great nations. What was war? Did gentlemen know? He would tell them.

Here the orator drew a picture of war that caused suffering monikinity to shudder. He viewed it in its four leading points; its religious, its pecuniary, its political, and its domestic penalties. He described war to be the demon-state of the monikin mind; as opposed to worship, to charity, brotherly love, and all the virtues. On its pecuniary penalties, he touched by exhibiting a tax-sheet. Buttons which cost sixpence a gross, he assured the House, would shortly cost sevenpence a gross. Here he was reminded that monikins no longer wore buttons. No matter, they bought and sold buttons, and the effects on trade were just the same. The political penalties of war he fairly showed to be frightful; but when he came to speak of the domestic penalties, there was not a dry eye in the House. Captain Poke blubbered so loud that I was in an agony lest he should be called to order.

"Regard that pure spirit," he cried, "crushed as it has been in the whirlwind of war. Behold her standing over the sod that covers the hero of his country, the husband of her virgin affections. In vain the orphan at her side turns its tearful eye upward, and asks for the plumes that so lately pleased its infant fancy; in vain its gentle voice inquires when he is to return, when he is to gladden their hearts with his presence"—but I can write no more. Sobs interrupted the speaker, and he took his seat in an ecstasy of godliness and benevolence.

I hurried across the house, to beg the brigadier would introduce me to this just monikin without a moment's delay. I felt as if I could take him to my heart at once, and swear an eternal friendship with a spirit so benevolent. The brigadier was too much agitated, at first, to attend to

me; but, after wiping his eyes at least a hundred times, he finally succeeded in arresting the torrents, and looked upward with a bland smile.

"Is he not a wonderful monikin?"

"Wonderful, indeed! How completely he puts us all to shame! Such a monikin can only be influenced by the purest love for the species."

"Yes, he is a class that we call the third monikinity. Nothing excites our zeal like the principles of the class of which he is a member!"

"How! Have you more than one class of the humane!"

"Certainly—the original, the representative, and the speculative."

"I am devoured by the desire to understand the distinctions, my dear brigadier."

"The original is an every-day class, that feels under the natural impulses. The representative is a more intellectual division, that feels chiefly by proxy. The speculatives are those whose sympathies are excited by positive interests, like the last speaker. This person has lately bought a farm by the acre, which he is about to sell in village lots by the foot, and war will knock the whole thing in the head. It is this which stimulates his benevolence in so lively a manner."

"Why, this is no more than a development of the social-state system—"

I was interrupted by the Speaker, who called the House to order. The vote on the resolution of the last orator was to be taken. It read as follows:—

"*Resolved*, That it is altogether unbecoming the d gnity and character of Leapthrough, for Leaplow to legislate on the subject of so petty a consideration as a certain pitiful treaty between the two countries."

"Unanimity—unanimity!" was shouted by fifty voices. Unanimity there was; and then the whole house set to work shaking hands and hugging each other, in pure joy at the success of the honorable and ingenious manner in which it had got rid of this embarrassing and impertinent question.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AN EFFECT OF LOGARITHMS ON MORALS—AN OBSCURATION, A DISSERTATION, AND A CALCULATION.

THE House had not long adjourned before Captain Poke and myself were favored with a visit from our colleague, Mr. Downright, who came on an affair of absorbing interest. He carried in his hand a small pamphlet; and the usual salutations were scarcely over before he directed our attention to a portion of its contents. It would seem that Leaplow was on the eve of experiencing a great moral eclipse. The periods and dates of the phenomenon (if that can be called a phenomenon which was of too frequent occurrence) had been calculated, with surprising accuracy, by the Academy of Leaphigh, and sent through its minister, as an especial favor, to our beloved country, in order that we should not be taken by surprise. The account of the affair read as follows—

"On the third day of the season of nuts, there will be the commencement of a great moral eclipse, in that portion of the monikin region which lies immediately about the pole. The property in eclipse will be the great moral postulate usually designated by the term Principle; and the intervening body will be the great immoral postulate, usually known as Interest. The frequent occurrence of the conjunction of these two important postulates has caused our moral mathematicians to be rather negligent of their calculations on this subject, of late years; but, to atone for this inexcusable indifference to one of the most important concerns of life, the calculating committee was instructed to pay unusual attention to all the obscurations of the present year, and this phenomenon, one of the most decided of our age, has been calculated with the utmost nicety and care. We give the results.

"The eclipse will commence by a motive of monikin vanity coming in contact with the sub-postulate of charity, at 1 A.M. The postulate in question will be totally hid from view, in the course of 6 h. 17 m.

from the moment of contact. The passage of a political intrigue will instantly follow, when the several sub-postulates of truth, honesty, disinterestedness, and patriotism, will all be obscured in succession, beginning with the lower limb of the first, and ending with all the limbs of the whole of them, in 3 h. 42 m. from the moment of contact. The shadow of vanity and political intrigue will first be deepened by the approach of prosperity, and this will be soon succeeded by the contact of a great pecuniary interest, at 10 h. 2 m. 1 s.; and in exactly 2 s., and 3-7 s., the whole of the great moral postulate of Principle will be totally hid from view. In consequence of this early passage of the darkest shadow that is ever cast by Interest, the passages of the respective shadows of ambition, hatred, jealousy, and all the other minor satellites of Interest, will be invisible.

"The country principally affected by this eclipse will be the republic of Leaplow, a community whose known intelligence and virtues are perhaps better qualified to resist its influence than any other. The time of occultation will be 9 y. 7 m. 26 d. 4 h. 16 m. 2 s. Principle will begin to reappear to the moral eye at the end of this period, first by the approach of Misfortune, whose atmosphere being much less dense than that of Interest, will allow of imperfect views of the obscured postulate; but the radiance of the latter will not be completely restored until the arrival of Misery, whose chastening colors invariably permit all truths to be discernible, although through a somber medium. To resume:

"Beginning of eclipse,	1 A.M.
Ecliptic opposition,	in 4 y. 6 m. 12 d. 9. h. from beginning of eclipse.
Middle,	in 4 y. 9 m. 0 d. 7 h. 9 m. from beginning of eclipse.
End of eclipse,	9 y. 11 m. 20 d. 3 h. 2 m. from beginning.
Period of occultation,	9 y. 7 m. 26 d. 4 h. 16 m. 2 s."

I gazed at the brigadier in admiration and awe. There was nothing remarkable in the eclipse itself, which was quite an every-day affair; but the precision with which it had been calculated added to its other phenomena the terrible circumstance of obtaining a glimpse into the future. I now began to perceive the immense difference between living consciously under a moral shadow, and living under it unconsciously. The latter was evidently a trifle compared with the former. Providence had most kindly provided for our happiness in denying the ability to see beyond the present moment.

Noah took the affair even more at heart than myself. He told me, with a rueful and prognosticating countenance, that we were fast drawing near to the autumnal equinox, when we should reach the commencement of a natural night of six months' duration; and although the benevolent substitute of steam might certainly in some degree lessen the evil, that it was a furious evil, after all, to exist for a period so weary without enjoying the light of the sun. He found the external glare of day bad enough, but he did not believe he should be able to endure its total absence. Natur' had made him a "watch and watch" critter. As for the twilight of which so much was said, it was worse than nothin', being neither one thing nor the other. For his part, he liked things "made out of whole cloth." Then he had sent the ship round to a distant roadstead, in order that there might be no more post-captains and rear-admirals among the people; and here had he been as much as four days on nothing but nuts. Nuts might do for the philosophy of a monkey, but he found, on trial, that it played the devil with the philosophy of a man. Things were bad enough as they were. He pined for a little pork—he cared not who knew it; it might not be very sentimental, he knew, but it was capital sea-food; his natur' was pretty much pork: he believed most men had, in some way or other, more or less pork in their human natur's; nuts might do for monikin natur', but human natur' loved meat; if monikins did not like it, monikins need not eat it;

there would be so much the more for those who did like it—he pined for his natural aliment, and as for living nine years in an eclipse, it was quite out of the question. The longest Stunnin'tun eclipses seldom went over three hours—he once knew Deacon Spiteful pray quite through one, from *apogee* to *perigee*. He therefore proposed that Sir John and he should resign their seats without delay, and that they should try to get the *Walrus* to the north'ard as quick as possible, lest they should be caught in the polar night. As for the Hon. Robert Smut, he wished him no better luck than to remain where he was all his life, and to receive his eight dollars a day in acorns.

Although it was impossible not to hear, and, having heard, not to record the sentiments of Noah, still my attention was much more strongly attracted by the demeanor of the brigadier than by the jeremiad of the sealer. To an anxious inquiry if he were not well, our worthy colleague auswered plaintively, that he mourned over the misfortune of his country.

"I have often witnessed the passage of the passions, and of the minor motives, across the disk of the great moral postulate, principle; but an occultation of its light by a pecuniary interest, and for so long a period, is fearful! Heaven only knows what will become of us!"

"Are not these eclipses, after all, so many mere illustrations of the social-stake system? I confess this occultation, of which you seem to have so much dread, is not so formidable a thing, on reflection, as it at first appeared to be."

"You are quite right, Sir John, as to the character of the eclipse itself, which, as a matter of course, must depend on the character of the intervening body. But the wisest and best of our philosophers hold that the entire system, of which we are but insignificant parts, is based on certain immutable truths of a divine origin. The premises, or postulates, of all these truths, are so many moral guides in the management of monikin affairs; and the moment they are lost sight of, as will be the case during these frightful nine years that are to come, we shall be abandoned entirely to selfishness. Now, self ishness is only too formidable when restrained by principle; but left to its own grasping desires and audacious sophisms, to me the moral perspective is terrible. We are only too much addicted to turn our eyes from principle, when it is shining in heavenly radiance, and in full glory, before us; it is not difficult, therefore, to foresee the nature of the consequences which are to follow its total and protracted obscuration."

"You, then, conceive there is a rule superior to interest, which ought to be respected in the control of monikin affairs?"

"Beyond a doubt; else in what should we differ from the beasts of prey?"

"I do not exactly see whether this does, or does not, accord with the notions of the political economists of the social-stake system."

"As you say, Sir John, it does, and does not. Your social-stake system supposes that he who has what is termed a distinct and prominent interest in society, will be the most likely to conduct its affairs wisely, justly, and disinterestedly. This would be true if those great principles which lie at the root of all happiness were respected; but unluckily, the stake in question, instead of being a stake in justice and virtue, is usually reduced to be merely a stake in property. Now all experience shows that the great property-incentives are to increase property, protect property, and to buy with property those advantages which ought to be independent of property, viz.: honors, dignities, power and immunities. I cannot say how it is with men, but our histories are eloquent on this head. We have had the property principle carried out thoroughly in our practice, and the result has shown that its chief operation is to render property as intact as possible, and the bones, and sinews, and marrow of all who do not possess it, its slaves. In short, the time has been when the rich were even exempt from contributing to the ordinary exigencies of the state. But it is quite useless to theorize on this subject, for, by that cry in the streets, the lower limb of the great postulate is beginning to be obscured, and, alas!

we shall soon have too much practical information."

The brigadier was right. On referring to the clock, it was found that, in truth, the eclipse had commenced some time before, and that we were on the verge of an absolute occultation of principle, by the basest and most sordid of all motives, pecuniary interest.

The first proof that was given of the true state of things was in the language of the people. The word interest was in every monikin's mouth, while the word principle, as indeed was no more than suitable, seemed to be quite blotted out of Leaplow vocabulary. To render a local term into English, half of the vernacular of the country appeared to be compressed into the single word "dollar." "Dollar —dollar—dollars"—nothing but "dollars." "Fifty thousand dollars—twenty thousand dollars—a hundred thousand dollars"—met one at every turn. The words rang at the corners—in the public ways—at the exchange—in the drawing-rooms—ay, even in the churches. If a temple had been reared for the worship of the Creator, the first question was, how much did it cost? If an artist submitted the fruits of his labors to the taste of his fellow citizens, conjectures were whispered among the spectators, touching its value in the current coin of the republic. If an author presented the offspring of his genius to the same arbiters, its merits were settled by a similar standard; and one divine, who had made a strenuous, but an ill-timed appeal to the charity of his countrymen, by setting forth the beauties as well as the rewards of the god-like property, was fairly put down by a demonstration that his proposition involved a considerable outlay, while it did not clearly show much was to be gained by going to heaven!

Brigadier Downright had good reasons for his somber anticipations, for all the acquirements, knowledge, and experience, obtained in many years of travel, were now found to be worse than useless. If my honorable colleague and co-voyager ventured a remark on the subject of foreign policy, a portion of politics to which he had given considerable attention, it was answered by a quotation from the stock market; an observation on a matter of taste was certain to draw forth a nice distinction between the tastes of certain liquors, together with a shrewd investigation of their several prices; and once, when the worthy monikin undertook to show, from what struck me to be singularly good data, that the foreign relations of the country were in a condition to require great firmness, a proper prudence, and much foresight, he was completely silenced by an antagonist showing, from the last sales, the high value of lots uptown!

In short, there was no dealing with any subject that could not resolve itself into dollars, by means of the customary exchanges. The infatuation spread from father to son; from husband to wife; from brother to sister; and from one collateral to another, until it pretty effectually assailed the whole of what is usually termed "society." Noah swore bitterly at this antagonist state of things. He affirmed that he could not even crack a walnut in a corner, but every monikin that passed appeared to grudge him the satisfaction, small as it was; and that Stunnain'tun, though a scramble-penny place as any he knew, was paradise to Leaplow, in the present state of things.

It was melancholy to remark how the luster of the ordinary virtues grew dim, as the period of occultation continued, and the eye gradually got to be accustomed to the atmosphere cast by the shadow of pecuniary interest. I involuntarily shuddered at the open and undisguised manner in which individuals, who might otherwise pass for respectable monikins, spoke of the means that they habitually employed in effecting their objects, and laid bare their utter forgetfulness of the great postulate that was hid. One coolly vaunted how much cleverer he was than the law; another proved to demonstration that he had outwitted his neighbor; while a third, more daring or expert, applied the same grounds of exultation to the entire neighborhood. This had the merit of cunning; that of dissimulation; another of deception, and all of success!

The shadow casts its malign influence on every interest connected with monikin life. Temples were raised to God on speculation; the government was perverted to a money investment, in which profit, and not justice and security, was the object; holy wedlock fast took the aspect of buying and selling, and few prayed who did not identify spiritual benefits with gold and silver.

The besetting propensity of my ancestor soon began to appear in Leaplow. Many of those pure and unsophisticated republicans shouted, "Property is in danger!" as stoutly as it was ever roared by Sir Joseph Job, and dark allusions were made to "revolutions" and "bayonets." But certain proof of the prevalence of the eclipse, and that the shadow of pecuniary interest lay dark on the land, was to be found in the language of what are called the "few." They began to throw dirt at all opposed to them, like so many fish-women; a sure symptom that the spirit of selfishness was thoroughly awakened. From much experience, I hold this sign to be infallible, that the sentiment of aristocracy is active and vigilant. I never yet visited a country in which a minority got into its head the crotchet it was alone fit to dictate to the rest of its fellow-creatures, that it did not, without delay, set about proving its position by reviling and calling names. In this particular "the few" are like women, who, conscious of their weakness, seldom fail to make up for the want of vigor in their limbs by having recourse to the vigor of the tongue. The "one" hangs; the "many" command by the dignity of force; the "few" vituperate and scold. This is, I believe, the case all over the world, except in those peculiar instances in which the "few" happen also to enjoy the privilege of hanging.

It is worthy of remark that the terms "rabble," "disorganizers," "jacobins," and "agrarians," * were bandied from one to the other, in Leaplow, under this malign influence, with precisely the same justice, discrimination, and taste, as they had been used by my ancestor in London, a few years before. Like causes notoriously produce like effects; and there is no one thing so much like an Englishman under the property fever, as a Leaplow monikin suffering under the same malady.

The effect produced on the state of parties by the passage of the shadow of pecuniary interest, was so singular as to deserve our notice. Patriots who had long been known for an indomitable resolution to support their friends, openly abandoned their claims on the rewards of the little wheel, and went over to the enemy; and this, too, without recourse to the mysteries of the "flap-jack." Judge People's Friend was completely annihilated for the moment—so much so, indeed, as to think seriously of taking another mission—for, during these eclipses, long service, public virtue, calculated amenity, and all the other bland qualities of your patriot, pass for nothing when weighed in the scale against profit and loss. It was fortunate the Leapthrough question was, in its essence, so well disposed of, though the uneasiness of those who bought and sold land by the inch, pushed even that interest before the public again by insisting that a few millions should be expended in destroying the munitions of war, lest the nation might improvidently be tempted to make use of them in the natural way. The cruisers were accordingly hauled into the stream and converted into tide mills, the gun-barrels were converted into gas-pipes, and the forts were converted, as fast as possible, into warehouses and tea-gardens. After this, it was much the fashion to affirm that the advanced state of civilization had rendered all future war quite out of the question. Indeed, the impetus that was given, by the effects of the shadow, in this way, to humanity in gross, was quite as remarkable as were

* It is scarcely necessary to tell the intelligent reader there is no proof that any political community was ever so bent on self-destruction as to enact agrarian laws, in the vulgar sense in which it has suited the arts of narrow-minded politicians to represent them ever since the revival of letters. The celebrated agrarian laws of Rome did not essentially differ from the distribution of our own military lands, or perhaps the similitude is greater to the modern Russian military colonies. Those who feel an interest in this subject would do well to consult Niebuhr.—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

its contrary tendencies on humanity in detail.

Public opinion was not backward in showing how completely it was acting under the influence of the shadow. Virtue began to be estimated by rent-rolls. The affluent, without hesitation, or indeed opposition, appropriated to themselves the sole use of the word respectable, while taste, judgment, honesty, and wisdom dropped like so many heirlooms quietly into the possession of those who had money. The Leaplowers are a people of great acuteness and of singular knowledge of details. Every considerable man in Bivouac soon had his social station assigned him, the whole community being divided into classes of "hundred-thousand-dollar monikins"—"fifty-thousand-dollar monikins"—"twenty-thousand-dollar monikins." Great conciseness in language was a consequence of this state of feeling. The old questions of "is he honest?" "is he capable?" "is he enlightened?" "is he wise?" "is he good?" being all comprehended in the single interrogatory of "is he rich?"

There was one effect of this very unusual state of things that I had not anticipated. All the money-getting classes, without exception, showed a singular predilection in favor of what is commonly called strong government; being not only a republic, but virtually a democracy, I found that much the larger portion of this highly respectable class of citizens were not at all backward in expressing their wish for a change. "How is this?" I demanded of the brigadier, whom I rarely quitted; for his advice and opinions were of great moment to me just at this particular crisis—"how is this, my good friend? I have always been led to think that trade is especially favorable to liberty; and here are all your commercial interests the loudest in their declamations against the institutions."

The brigadier smiled; it was but a melancholy smile, after all; for his spirits appeared to have quite deserted him.

"There are three great divisions among politicians," he said—"they who do not like liberty at all—they who like it as low down as their own particular class—and they who like it for the sake of their fellow-creatures. The first are not numerous, but powerful by means of combinations; the second is a very irregular corps, including, as a matter of course, nearly everybody, but is wanting, of necessity, in concert and discipline, since no one descends below his own level; the third are but few, alas, how few! and are composed of those who look beyond their own selfishness. Now, your merchants, dwelling in towns, and possessing concert, means, and identity of interests, have been able to make themselves remarkable for contending with despotic power, a fact which has obtained for them a cheap reputation for liberality of opinion; but, so far as monikin experience goes—men may have proved to be better disposed—no government that is essentially influenced by commerce has ever been otherwise than exclusive, or aristocratic."

I bethought me of Venice, Genoa, Pisa, the Hanse towns, and all the other remarkable places of this character in Europe, and I felt the justice of my friend's distinction, at the same time I could not but observe how much more the minds of men are under the influence of names and abstractions than under the influence of positive things. To this opinion the brigadier very readily assented, remarking, at the same time, that a well-wrought theory had generally more effect on opinion than fifty facts; a result that he attributed to the circumstance of monikins having a besetting predisposition to save themselves the trouble of thinking.

I was in particular struck with the effect of the occultation of principle on motives. I had often remarked that it was by no means safe to depend on one's own motives, for two sufficient reasons; first, that we did not always know what our own motives were; and secondly, admitting that we did, it was quite unreasonable to suppose that our friends would believe them what we thought them to be ourselves. In the present instance, every monikin seemed perfectly aware of the difficulty; and, instead of waiting for his acquaintances to attribute some moral

enormity as his governing reason, he prudently adopted a moderately selfish inducement for his acts, which he proclaimed with a simplicity and frankness that generally obtained credit. Indeed, the fact once conceded that the motive was not offensively disinterested and just, no one was indisposed to listen to the projects of his friend, who usually rose in estimation, as he was found to be ingenious, calculating, and shrewd. The effect of all this was to render society singularly sincere and plain-spoken; and one accustomed to so much ingenuousness, or who was ignorant of the cause, might, plausibly enough, suppose at times that accident had thrown him into an extraordinary association with so many *artistes*, who, as it is commonly expressed, lived by their wits. I will avow that, had it been the fashion to wear pockets at Leaplow, I should often have been concerned for their contents; for sentiments so purely unsophisticated, were so openly advanced under the influence of the shadow, that one was inevitably led, oftener than was pleasant, to think of the relations between *meum* and *tuum*, as well as of the unexpected causes by which they were sometimes disturbed.

A vacancy occurred, the second day of the eclipse, among the representatives of Bivouac, and the candidate of the horizontals would certainly have been chosen to fill it, but for a *contretemps* connected with this affair of motives. The individual in question had lately performed that which, in most other countries, and under other circumstances, would have passed for an act of creditable national feeling; but which, quite as a matter of course, was eagerly presented to the electors, by his opponents, as a proof of his utter unfitness to be intrusted with their interests. The friends of the candidate took the alarm, and indignantly denied the charges of the perpendiculars, affirming that their monikin had been well paid for what he had done. In an evil hour, the candidate undertook to explain, by means of a handbill, in which he stated that he had been influenced by no other motive than a desire to do that which he believed to be right. Such a person was deemed to be wanting in natural abilities, and, as a matter of course, he was defeated; for your Leaplow elector was not such an ass as to confide the care of his interests to one who knew so little how to take care of his own.

About this time, too, a celebrated dramatist produced a piece in which the hero performed prodigies under the excitement of patriotism, and the labor of his pen was incontinently damned for his pains; both pit and boxes—the galleries dissenting—deciding that it was out of all nature to represent a monikin incurring danger in this unheard-of manner, without a motive. The unhappy wight altered the last scene, by causing his hero to be rewarded by a good round sum of money, when the piece had a very respectable run for the rest of the season, though I question if it ever were as popular as it would have been, had this precaution been taken before it was first acted.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVES TO A LEGISLATOR—MORAL CONSECUTIVENESS, COMETS, KITES, AND A CONVOY; WITH SOME EVERY-DAY LEGISLATION; TOGETHER WITH CAUSE AND EFFECT.

LEGISLATION, during the occultation of the great moral postulate principle by the passage of pecuniary interest, is, at the best, but a melancholy affair. It proved to be peculiarly so with us just at that moment, for the radiance of the divine property had been a good deal obscured in the Houses, for a long time previously, by the interference of various minor satellites. In nothing, therefore, did the deplorable state of things which existed make itself more apparent, than in our proceedings.

As Captain Poke and myself, notwithstanding our having taken different stands in politics, still continued to live together, I had better opportunities to note the workings of the obscuration on the ingenious mind of my colleague than

on that of most other persons. He early began to keep a diary of his expenses, regularly deducting the amount at night from the sum of eight dollars, and regarding the balance as so much clear gain. His conversation, too, soon betrayed a leaning to his personal interests, instead of being of that pure and elevated cast which should characterize the language of a statesman. He laid down the position, pretty dogmatically, that legislation, after all, was work; that "the laborer was worthy of his hire;" and that, for his part, he felt no great disposition to go through the vexation and trouble of helping to make laws, unless he could see, with a reasonable certainty, that something was to be got by it. He thought Leaplow had quite laws enough as it was —more than she respected or enforced— and if she wanted any more, all they had to do was to pay for them.

He should take an early occasion to propose that all our wages—or, at any rate, his own; others might do as they please — should be raised, at the very least, two dollars a day, and this while he merely sat in the House; for he wished to engage me to move, by way of amendment, that as much more should be given to the committees. He did not think it was fair to exact of a member to be a committee-man for nothin', although most of them were committee-men for nothin'; and if we were called on to keep two watches, in this manner, the least that could be done would be to give us *two pays*. He said, considering it in the most favorable point of view, that there was great wear and tear of brain in legislation, and he should never be the man he was before he engaged in the trade; he assured me that his idees, sometimes, were so complicated that he did not know where to find the one he wanted, and that he had wished for a *cauda* a thousand times since he had been in the house, for, by keeping the end of it in his hand, like the bight of a rope, he might always have suthin' tangible to cling to. He told me, as a great secret, that he was fairly tired of rummaging among his thoughts for the knowledge necessary to understand what was going on, and that he had finally concluded to put himself, for the rest of the session, under the convoy of a God-like. He had been looking out for a fit fugle-man of this sort, and he had pretty much determined to follow the signals of the great god-like of the parpendic'lars, like the rest of them, for it would occasion less confusion in the ranks, and enable him to save himself a vast deal of trouble in making up his mind. He didn't know, on the whole, but eight dollars a day might give a living profit, provided he could throw all the thinking on his god-like, and turn his attention to suthin' else; he thought of writing his v'y'ges, for he understood that anything from foreign parts took like wild-fire in Leaplow; and if they didn't take, he could always project charts for a living.

Perhaps it will be necessary to explain what Noah meant by saying that he thought of engaging a god-like. The reader has had some insight into the nature of one set of political leaders in Leaplow, who are known by the name of the most patriotic patriots. These persons, it is scarcely necessary to say, are always with the majority, or in a situation to avail themselves of the evolutions of the little wheel. Their great rotatory principle keeps them pretty constantly in motion, it is true; but while there is a centrifugal force to maintain this action, great care has been had to provide a centripetal counterpoise, in order to prevent them from bolting out of the political orbit. It is supposed to be owing to this peculiarity in their party organizations, that your Leaplow patriot is so very remarkable for going round and round a subject, without ever touching it.

As an offset to this party arrangement, the perpendiculars have taken refuge in the god-likes. A god-like, in Leaplow politics, in some respects resembles a saint in the Catholic calendar; that is to say, he is canonized, after passing through a certain amount of temptation and vice with a whole skin; after having his cause pleaded for a certain number of years before the high authorities of his

party; and usually, after having had a pretty good taste of purgatory. Canonization attained, however, all gets to be plain sailing with him. He is spared, singular as it may appear, even a large portion of his former "wear and tear" of brains, as Noah had termed it, for nothing puts one so much at liberty in this respect, as to have full powers to do all the thinking. Thinking in company, like traveling in company, requires that we should have some respect to the movements, wishes, and opinions of others; but he who gets a *carte blanche* for his sentiments, resembles the uncaged bird, and may fly in whatever direction most pleases himself, and feel confident, as he goes, that his ears will be saluted with the usual traveler's signal of "all's right."

I can best compare the operation of your god-like and his votaries, to the action of a locomotive with its railroad train. As that goes, this follows; faster or slower, the movement is certain to be accompanied; when the steam is up they fly, when the fire is out they crawl, and that, too, with a very uneasy sort of motion; and when a bolt is broken, they who have just been riding without the smallest trouble to themselves, are compelled to get out and push the load ahead as well as they can, frequently with very rueful faces, and in very dirty ways. The cars whisk about, precisely as the locomotive whisks about, all the turn-outs are necessarily imitated, and, in short, one goes after the other very much as it is reasonable to suppose will happen when two bodies are chained together, and the entire moving power is given to only one of them. A god-like in Leaplow, moreover, is usually a riddle. It was the object of Noah to hitch on to one of these moral steam-tugs, in order that he might be dragged through his duties without effort to himself; an expedient, as the old sealer expressed it, that would, in some degree, remedy his natural want of a *cauda*, by rendering him nothing but tail.

"I expect, Sir John," he said, for he had a practice of expecting by way of conjecture, "I expect this is the reason why the Leaplowers dock themselves. They find it more convenient to give up the management of their affairs to some one of these god-likes, and fall into his wake like the tail of a comet, which makes it quite unnecessary to have any other *cauda*."

"I understand you; they amputate to prevent tautology."

Noah rarely spoke of any project until his mind was fairly made up; and the execution usually soon followed the proposition. The next thing I heard of him, therefore, he was fairly under the convoy, as he called it, of one of the most prominent of the riddles. Curious to know how he liked the experiment, after a week's practice, I called his attention to the subject, by a pretty direct inquiry.

He told me it was altogether the pleasantest mode of legislating that had ever been devised. He was now perfectly master of his own time, and in fact, he was making out a set of charts for the Leaplow marine, a task that was likely to bring him in a good round sum, as pumpkins were cheap, and in the polar seas he merely copied the monikin authorities, and out of it he had things pretty much his own way. As for the Great Allegory, when he wanted a hint about it, or, indeed, about any other point at issue, all he had to do was to inquire what his god-like thought about it, and to vote accordingly. Then he saved himself a great deal of breath in the way of argument out of doors, for he and the rest of the *clientèle* of this riddle, having officially invested their patron with all their own parts, the result had been such an accumulation of knowledge in this one individual, as enabled them ordinarily to floor any antagonist by the simple quotation of his authority. Such or such is the opinion of god-like this or of god-like that, was commonly sufficient; and then there was no lack of material, for he had taken care to provide himself with a riddle who, he really believed, had given an opinion, at some time or other, on every side of every subject that had ever been mooted in Leaplow. He could nullify, or mollify, or qualify, with the best of them; and these, which he termed the three *fies*,

he believed were the greatest requisites of a Leaplow legislator. He admitted, however, that some show of independence was necessary, in order to give value to the opinions of even a god-like, for monikin nature revolted at anything like total mental dependence; and that he had pretty much made up his mind to think for himself on a question that was to be decided that very day.

The case to which the captain alluded was this. The city of Bivouac was divided in three pretty nearly equal parts, which were separated from each other by two branches of a marsh; one part of the town being on a sort of island, and the other two parts on the respective margins of the low land. It was very desirable to connect these different portions of the capital by causeways, and a law to that effect had been introduced in the House. Everybody, in or out of the House, was in favor of the project, for the causeways had become, in some measure, indispensable. The only disputed point was the length of the works in question. One who is but little acquainted with legislation, and who has never witnessed the effects of an occultation of the great moral postulate Principle, by the orb Pecuniary Interest, would very plausibly suppose that the whole affair lay in a nutshell, and that all we had to do was to pass a law ordering the causeways to extend just as far as the public convenience rendered it necessary. But these are mere tyros in the affairs of monikins. The fact was that there were just as many different opinions and interests at work to regulate the length of the causeways, as there were owners of land along their line of route. The great object was to start in what was called the business quarter of the town and then to proceed with the work as far as circumstances would allow. We had propositions before us in favor of from one hundred feet as far up to ten thousand. Every inch was fought for with as much obstinacy as if it were an important breach that was defended; and combinations and conspiracies were as rife as if we were in the midst of a revolution. It was the general idea, that by filling in with dirt, a new town might be built wherever the causeway terminated, and fortunes made by an act of Parliament. The inhabitants of the island rallied *en masse* against the causeway leading one inch *from* their quarter, after it had fairly reached it; and so, throughout the entire line, monikins battled for what they called their interests, with an obstinacy worthy of heroes.

On this great question, for it had, in truth, become of the last importance by dragging into its consideration most of the leading measures of the day, as well as six or seven of the principal ordinances of the great national allegory, the respective partisans logically contending that, for the time being, nothing should advance a foot in Leaplow that did not travel along the causeway. Noah determined to take an independent stand. This resolution was not lightly formed, for he remained rather undecided, until by waiting a sufficient time, he felt quite persuaded that nothing was to be got by following any other course. His god-like luckily was in the same predicament, and everything promised a speedy occasion to show the world what it was to act on principle; and this, too, in the middle of a moral eclipse.

When the question came to be discussed, the land-holders along the first line of the causeway were soon reasoned down by the superior interests of those who lived on the island. The rub was, the point of permitting the work to go any further. The islanders manifested great liberality, according to their account of themselves; for they even consented that the causeway should be constructed on the other marsh to precisely such a distance as would enable any one to go as near as possible to the hostile quarter, without absolutely entering it. To admit the latter, they proved to demonstration, would be the changing the character of their own island from that of an *entrepôt* to that of a mere thoroughfare. No reasonable monikin could expect it of them.

As the horizontals, by some calculation that I never understood, had satisfied themselves it might better answer their

purposes to construct the entire work, than to stop anywhere between the two extremes, my duty was luckily, on this occasion, in exact accordance with my opinions; and, as a matter of course, I voted, this time, in a way of which I could approve. Noah, finding himself a free agent, now made his push for character, and took sides with us. Very fortunately we prevailed, all the beaten interests joining themselves, at the last moment, to the weakest side, or, in other words, to that which was right; and Leaplow presented the singular spectacle of having a just enactment passed during the occultation of the great moral postulate, so often named. I ought to mention that I have termed principle a postulate, throughout this narrative, simply because it is usually in the dilemma of a disputed proposition.

No sooner was the result known, than my worthy colleague came round to the horizontal side of the House, to express his satisfaction with himself for the course he had just taken. He said it was certainly very convenient and very labor-saving to obey a god-like, and that he got on much better with his charts now he was at liberty to give his whole mind to the subject; but there was suthin'—he didn't know what—but "a sort of Stunnin'tun feeling" in doing what one thought right, after all, that caused him to be glad that he had voted for the whole causeway. He did not own any land in Leaplow, and therefore he concluded that what he had done, he had done for the best; at any rate, if he had got nothin' by it, he had lost nothin' by it, and he hoped all would come right in the end. The people of the island, it is true, had talked pretty fair about what they would do for those who should sustain their interests, but he had got sick of a currency in promises; and fair words, at his time of life, didn't go for much; and so, on the whole, he had pretty much concluded to do as he had done.

He thought no one could call in question his vote, for he was just as poor and badly off, now he had voted, as he was while he was making up his mind. For his part, he shouldn't be ashamed, hereafter, to look both Deacon Snort and the parson in the face, when he got home, or even Miss Poke. He knew what it was to have a clean conscience, as well as any man; for none so well knew what it was to be without anything, as they who had felt by experience its want. His god-like was a very labor-saving god-like; but he had found, on inquiry, that he came from another part of the island, and that he didn't care a straw which way his kite-tail (Noah's manner of pronouncing *clientele*) voted. In short, he defied any one to say aught ag'in him this time, and he was not sorry the occasion had offered to show his independence, for his enemies had not been backward in remarking that, for some days, he had been little better than a speaking-trumpet to roar out anything his god-like might wish to have proclaimed. He concluded by stating that he could not hold out much longer without meat of some sort or other, and by begging that I would second a resolution he thought of offering, by which regular substantial rations were to be dealt out to all the human part of the House. The inhumans might live upon nuts still, if they liked them.

I remonstrated against the project of the rations, made a strong appeal to his pride, by demonstrating that we should be deemed little better than brutes if we were seen eating flesh, and advised him to cause some of his nuts to be roasted, by way of variety. After a good deal of persuasion, he promised further abstinence, although he went away with a singularly carnivorous look about the mouth, and an eye that spoke *pork* in every glance.

I was at home the next day, busy with my friend the brigadier, in looking over the great national allegory, with a view to prevent falling, unwittingly, into any more offenses of quoting its opinion, when Noah burst into the room, as rabid as a wolf that had been bitten by a whole pack of hounds. Such, indeed, was, in some measure, his situation, for, according to his statement, he had been baited that morning, in the public streets even, by every monikin, monikina, monikino, brat, and beggar, that he had seen. Aston-

ished to hear that my colleague had fallen into this disfavor with his constituents, I was not slow in asking an explanation.

The captain affirmed that the matter was beyond the reach of any explanation it was in his power to give. He had voted in the affair of the causeway, in strict conformity with the dictates of his conscience, and yet here was the whole population accusing him of bribery—nay, even the journals had openly flouted at him for what they called his barefaced and flagrant corruption. Here the captain laid before us six or seven of the leading journals of Bivouac, in all of which his late vote was treated with quite as little ceremony as if it had been an unequivocal act of sheep-stealing.

I looked at my friend the brigadier for an explanation. After running his eye over the articles in the journals, the latter smiled, and cast a look of commiseration at our colleague.

"You have certainly committed a grave fault here, my friend," he said, "and one that is seldom forgiven in Leaplow—perhaps I might say never, during the occultation of the great moral postulate, as happens to be the case at present."

"Tell me my sins at once, brigadier," cried Noah, with the look of a martyr, "and put me out of pain."

"You have forgotten to display a *motive* for your stand during the late hot discussion; and as a matter of course, the community ascribes the worst that monikin ingenuity can devise. Such an oversight would ruin even a god-like!"

"But, my dear Mr. Downright," I kindly interposed, "our colleague, in this instance, is supposed to have acted on principle."

The brigadier looked up, turning his nose into the air, like a pup that has not yet opened his eyes, and then intimated that he could not see the quality I had named, it being obscured by the passage of the orb of pecuniary interest before its disk. I now began to comprehend the case, which really was much more grave than, at first, I could have believed possible. Noah himself seemed staggered, for I believe he had fallen on the simple and natural expedient of inquiring what he himself would have thought of the conduct of a colleague who had given a vote on a subject so weighty, without exposing a motive.

"Had the captain owned but a foot square of earth, at the end of the causeway," observed the brigadier, mournfully, "the matter might be cleared up; but, as things are, it is, beyond dispute, a most unfortunate occurrence."

"But Sir John voted with me, and he is no more a freeholder in Leaplow, than I am myself."

"True; but Sir John voted with the bulk of his political friends."

"All the horizontals were not in the majority; for at least twenty went, on this occasion, with the minority."

"Undeniable—yet every monikin of them had a visible *motive*. This owned a lot by the wayside; that had houses on the island, and another was the heir of a great proprietor at the same point of the road. Each and all had their distinct and positive interests at stake, and not one of them was guilty of so great a weakness as to leave his cause to be defended by the extravagant pretension of mere principle!"

"My god-like, the greatest of all the riddles, absented himself, and did not vote at all."

"Simply because he had no ground to justify any course he might take. No public monikin can expect to escape censure, if he fail to put his friends in the way of citing some plausible and intelligible motive for his conduct."

"How, sir! cannot a man, once in his life, do an act without being bought like a horse or a dog, and escape with an inch of character!"

"I shall not take upon myself to say what *men* can do," returned the brigadier; "no doubt they manage this affair better than it is managed here; but, so far as monikins are concerned, there is no course more certain to involve a total loss of character—I may say so destructive, to reputation even for intellect—as to act without a good, apparent, and substantial *motive*."

"In the name of God, what is to be done, brigadier?"

"I see no other course than to resign. Your constituents must very naturally have lost all confidence in you; for one who so very obviously neglects his own interests it cannot be supposed will be very tenacious about protecting the interests of others. If you would escape with the little character that is left you will forthwith resign. I do not perceive the smallest chance for you by going through gyration No. 4, both public opinions uniformly condemning the monikin who acts without a pretty obvious as well as a pretty weighty motive."

Noah made a merit of necessity; and, after some further deliberation between us, he signed his name to the following letter to the Speaker, which was drawn up on the spot by the brigadier:

"MR. SPEAKER.—The state of my health obliges me to return the high political trust which has been confided to me by the citizens of Bivouac into the hands from which it was received. In tendering my resignation I wish to express the great regret with which I part from my colleagues so every way worthy of profound respect and esteem, and I beg you to assure them, that wherever fate may hereafter lead me, I shall ever retain the deepest regard for every honorable member with whom it has been my good fortune to serve. The emigrant interest, in particular, will ever be the nearest and dearest to my heart.

"Signed, NOAH POKE."

The captain did not affix his name to this letter without many heavy sighs and divers throes of ambition; for even a mistaken politician yields to necessity with regret. Having changed the word emigrant to that of "immigrunt," however, he put as good a face as possible on the matter, and wrote the fatal signature. He then left the House, declaring he didn't so much begrudge his successor the pay, as nothing but nuts were to be had with the money; and that, as for himself, he felt as sneaking as he believed was the case with Nebuchadnezzar when he was compelled to get down on all fours and eat grass.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SOME EXPLANATIONS—A HUMAN APPETITE —A DINNER AND A BONNE BOUCHE.

THE brigadier and myself remained behind to discuss the general bearings of this unexpected event.

"Your rigid demand for motives, my good sir, I remarked, "reduces the Leaplow political morality very much, after all, to the level of the social-stake system of our part of the world."

"They both depend on the crutch of personal interests, it is true; though there is between them the difference of the interests of a part and of the interests of the whole."

"And could a part act less commendably than the whole appear to have acted in this instance?"

"You forget that Leaplow, just at this moment, is under a moral eclipse. I shall not say that these eclipses do not occur often, but they occur quite as frequently in other parts of the region as they occur here. We have three great modes of controlling monikin affairs, viz., the one, the few, and the many—"

"Precisely the same classification exists among men!" I interrupted.

"Some of our improvements are reflected backward; twilight following as well as preceding the passage of the sun," quite coolly returned the brigadier. "We think that the many come nearest to balancing the evil, although we are very far from believing even them to be immaculate. Admitting that the tendencies to wrong are equal in the three systems (which we do not, however, for we think our own has the least), it is contended that the many escape one great source of oppression and injustice, by escaping the onerous provisions which physical weakness is compelled to make in order to protect itself against physical strength."

"This is reversing a very prevalent opinion among men, sir, who usually

maintain that the tyranny of the many is the worst sort of all tyrannies."

"This opinion has got abroad simply because the lion has not been permitted to draw his own picture. As cruelty is commonly the concomitant of cowardice, so is oppression nine times out of ten the result of weakness. It is natural for the few to dread the many, while it is not natural for the many to dread the few. Then under institutions in which the many rule, certain great principles that are founded on natural justice, as a matter of course, are openly recognized; and it is rare, indeed, that they do not, more or less, influence the public acts. On the other hand, the control of a few requires that these same truths should be either mystified or entirely smothered; and the consequence is injustice."

"But, admitting all your maxims, brigadier, as regards the few and the many, you must yourself allow that here, in your beloved Leaplow itself, monikins consult their own interests; and this, after all, is acting on the fundamental principle of the great European social-stake system."

"Meaning that the goods of the world ought to be the test of political power. By the sad confusion which exists among us, at this moment, Sir John, you must perceive that we are not exactly under the most salutary of all possible influences. I take it that the great desideratum of society is to be governed by certain great moral truths. The inferences and corollaries of these truths are principles which come of heaven. Now, agreeably to the monikin dogmas, the love of money is 'of the earth, earthy'; and, at the first blush, it would not seem to be quite safe to receive such an inducement as the governing motive of one monikin, and, by a pretty fair induction, it would seem to be equally unwise to admit it for a good many. You will remember, also, that when none but the rich have authority, they control not only their own property, but that of others who have less. Your principle supposes, that in taking care of his own, the elector of wealth must take care of what belongs to the rest of the community; but our experience shows that a monikin can be particularly careful of himself, and singularly negligent of his neighbor. Therefore do we hold that money is a bad foundation for power."

"You unsettle everything, brigadier, without finding a substitute."

"Simply because it is easy to unsettle everything, and very difficult to find substitutes. But, as respects the base of society, I merely doubt the wisdom of setting up a qualification that we all know depends on an unsound principle. I much fear, Sir John, that, so long as monikins are monikins, we shall never be quite perfect; and as to your social-stake system, I am of opinion that as society is composed of all, it may be well to hear what all have to say about its management."

"Many men, and, I dare say, many monikins, are not to be trusted even with the management of their own concerns."

"Very true; but it does not follow that other men, or other monikins, will lose sight of their own interests on this account, if vested with the right to act as their substitutes. You have been long enough a legislator, now, to have got some idea how difficult it is to make even a direct and responsible representative respect entirely the interests and wishes of his constituents; and the fact will show you how little he will be likely to think of others, who believes that he acts as their master and not as their servant."

"The amount of all this, brigadier, is that you have little faith in monikin disinterestedness in any shape; that you believe he who is intrusted with power will abuse it; and therefore you choose to divide the trust, in order to divide the abuses; that the love of money is an 'earthy' quality, and not to be confided in as the controlling power of a state; and, finally, that the social-stake system is radically wrong, inasmuch as it is no more than carrying out a principle that is in itself defective."

My companion gaped, like one content to leave the matter there. I wished him a good morning, and walked upstairs

in quest of Noah, whose carnivorous looks had given me considerable uneasiness. The captain was out; and, after searching for him in the streets for an hour or two, I returned to our abode fatigued and hungry.

At no great distance from our own door I met Judge People's Friend, shorn and dejected, and I stopped to say a kind word before going up the ladder. It was quite impossible to see a gentleman, whom one had met in good society and in better fortunes, with every hair shaved from his body, his apology for a tail still sore from its recent amputation, and his entire mien expressive of republican humility, without a desire to condole with him. I expressed my regrets, therefore, as succinctly as possible, encouraging him with the hope of seeing a new covering of down before long, but delicately abstaining from any allusion to the *cauda*, whose loss I knew was irretrievable. To my great surprise, however, the judge answered cheerfully, discarding, for the moment, every appearance of self-abasement and mortification.

"How is this?" I cried; "are you not then miserable?"

"Very far from it, Sir John—I never was in better spirits, or had better prospects, in my life."

I remember the extraordinary manner in which the brigadier had saved Noah's head, and was fully resolved not to be astonished at any manifestation of monikin ingenuity. Still I could not forbear demanding an explanation.

"Why, it may seem odd to you, Sir John, to find a politician, who is apparently in the depths of despair, really on the eve of a glorious preferment. Such, however, is in fact my case. In Leaplow humility is everything. The monikin who will take care and repeat sufficiently often that he is just the poorest devil going, that he is absolutely unfit for even the meanest employment in the land, and in other respects ought to be hooted out of society, may very safely consider himself in a fair way to be elevated to some of the dignities he declares himself the least fitted to fill."

"In such a case, all he will have to do then, will be to make his choice, and denounce himself loudest touching his special disqualifications for that very station?"

"You are apt, Sir John, and would succeed, if you would only consent to remain among us?" said the judge, winking.

"I begin to see into your management—after all, you are neither miserable nor ashamed?"

"Not the least in the world. It is of more importance for monikins of my caliber to seem to be anything than to be it. My fellow-citizens are usually satisfied with this sacrifice; and, now principle is eclipsed, nothing is easier."

"But how happens it, judge, that one of your surprising dexterity and agility should be caught tripping? I had thought you particularly expert, and infallible in all the gyrations. Perhaps the little affair of the *cauda* has leaked out?"

The judge laughed in my face.

"I see you know little of us, after all, Sir John. Here have we proscribed *caudæ*, as anti-republican, both public opinions setting their faces against them; and yet a monikin may wear one abroad a mile long with impunity, if he will just submit to a new dock when he comes home, and swear that he is the most miserable wretch going. If he can throw in a favorable word, too, touching the Leaplow cats and dogs—Lord bless you, sir! they would pardon treason!"

"I begin to comprehend your policy, judge, if not your polity. Leaplow being a popular government, it becomes necessary that its public agents should be popular too. Now, as monikins naturally delight in their own excellences, nothing so disposes them to give credit to another as his professions that he is worse than themselves."

The judge nodded and grinned.

"But another word, dear sir—as you feel yourself constrained to commend the cats and dogs of Leaplow, do you belong to that school of philocats who take their revenge for their amenity to the quadrupeds by berating their fellow-creatures?"

The judge started, and glanced about him as if he dreaded a thief-taker. Then

earnestly imploring me to respect his situation, he added in a whisper that the subject of the people was sacred with him, that he rarely spoke of them without a reverence, and that his favorable sentiments in relation to the cats and dogs were not dependent on any particular merits of the animals themselves, but merely because they were the people's cats and dogs. Fearful that I might say something still more disagreeable, the judge hastened to take his leave, and I never saw him afterward. I make no doubt, however, that in good time his hair grew as he grew again into favor, and that he found the means to exhibit the proper length of tail on all suitable occasions.

A crowd in the street now caught my attention. On approaching it a colleague who was there was kind enough to explain its cause.

It would seem that certain Leaphighers had been traveling in Leaplow; and, not satisfied with this liberty, they had actually written books concerning things that they had seen, and things that they had not seen. As respects the latter, neither of the public opinions was very sensitive, although many of them reflected on the Great National Allegory and the sacred rights of the monikins; but as respects the former there was a very lively excitement. These writers had the audacity to say that the Leaplowers had cut off all their *caudæ*, and the whole community was convulsed at an outrage so unprecedented. It was one thing to take such a step, and another to have it proclaimed to the world in books. If the Leaplowers had no tails it was clearly their own fault. Nature had formed them with tails. They had bobbed themselves on a republican principle; and no one's principles ought to be thrown into his face, in this rude manner, more especially during a moral eclipse.

The dispensers of the essence of lopped tails threatened vengeance; caricaturists were put in requisition; some grinned, some menaced, some swore, and all read!

I left the crowd, taking the direction of my door again, pondering on this singular state of society, in which a peculiarity that had been deliberately and publicly adopted, should give rise to a sensitiveness of a character so unusual. I very well knew that men are commonly more ashamed of natural imperfections than those which, in a great measure, depend on themselves; but then men are, in their own estimation at least, placed by nature at the head of creation, and in that capacity, it is reasonable to suppose they will be jealous of their natural privileges. The present case was rather Leaplow than generic; and I could only account for it by supposing that nature had placed certain nerves in the wrong part of the Leaplow anatomy.

On entering the house a strong smell of roasted meat saluted my nostrils, causing a very unphilosophical pleasure to the olfactory nerves, a pleasure which acted very directly, too, on the gastric juices of the stomach. In plain English, I had very sensible evidence that it was not enough to transport a man to the monikin region, send him to parliament, and keep him on nuts for a week, to render him exclusively ethereal; I found it was vain "to kick against the pricks." The odor of roasted meat was stronger than all the facts just named, and I was fain to abandon philosophy, and surrender to the belly. I descended incontinently to the kitchen, guided by a sense no more spiritual than that which directs the hound in the chase.

On opening the door of our refectory such a delicious perfume greeted the nose, that I melted like a romantic girl at the murmur of a waterfall, and, losing sight of all the sublime truths so lately acquired, I was guilty of the particular human weakness which is usually described as having the "mouth water."

The sealer had quite taken leave of his monikin forbearance, and was enjoying himself in a peculiarly human manner. A dish of roasted meat was lying before him, and his eyes fairly glared as he turned them from me to the viand, in a way to render it a little doubtful whether I was a welcome visitor. But that honest old principle of seamen, which never re-

fuses to share equally with an ancient messmate, got the better even of his voracity.

"Sit down, Sir John," the captain cried, without ceasing to masticate, "and make no bones of it. To own the fact, the latter are almost as good as the flesh. I never tasted a sweeter morsel!"

I did not wait for a second invitation, the reader may be sure; and in less than ten minutes the dish was as clear as a table that had been swept by harpies. As this work is intended for one in which truth is rigidly respected, I shall avow that I do not remember any cultivation of sentiment which gave me half so much satisfaction as that short and hurried repast. I look back to it, even now, as to the very *beau idéal* of a dinner! Its fault was in the quantity, and not in quality.

I gazed greedily about for more. Just then I caught a glimpse of a face that seemed looking at me with melancholy reproach. The truth flashed upon me in a flood of remorse. Rushing upon Noah like a tiger, I seized him by the throat, and cried, in a voice of despair:

"Cannibal, what hast thou done?"

"Loosen your grip, Sir John—we do not relish these hugs at Stunnin'tun."

"Wretch, thou hast made me the participator of thy crime! We have eaten Brigadier Downright!"

"Loosen, Sir John, or human natur' will rebel."

"Monster! give up thy unholy repast—dost not see a million reproaches in the eyes of the innocent victim of thy insatiable appetites?"

"Cast off, Sir John, cast off, while we are friends; I care not if I have swallowed all the brigadiers in Leaplow—off hands!"

"Never, monster! until thou disgorgest thy unholy meal!"

Noah could endure no more; but, seizing me by the throat, on the retaliating principle, I soon had some such sensations as one would be apt to feel if his gullet were in a vise. I shall not attempt to describe very minutely the miracle that followed. Hanging ought to be an effectual remedy for many delusions; for, in my case, the bowstring I was under certainly did wonders in a very short time. Gradually the whole scene changed. First came a mist, then a vertigo; and finally, as the captain relaxed his hold, objects appeared in new forms, and instead of being in our lodgings in Bivouac, I found myself in my old apartments in the Rue de Rivoli, Paris.

"King!" exclaimed Noah, who stood before me, red in the face with exertion; "this is no boy's play, and if it's to be repeated, I shall use a lashing! Where would be the harm, Sir John, if a man had eaten a monkey?"

Astonishment kept me mute. Every object, just as I had left it the morning we started for London, on our way to Leaphigh, was there. A table in the center of the room was covered with sheets of paper closely written over, which, on examination, I found contained this manuscript as far as the last chapter. Both the captain and myself were attired as usual; I *a la Parisien*, and *a la* Stunnin'tun. A small ship, very ingeniously made, and very accurately rigged, lay on the floor, with "*Walrus*" written on her stern. As my bewildered eye caught a glimpse of this vessel, Noah informed me that, having nothing to do except to look after my welfare (a polite way of characterizing his ward over my person, as I afterward found), he had employed his leisure in constructing the toy.

All was inexplicable. There was really the smell of meat. I had also that peculiar sensation of fullness which is apt to succeed a dinner, and a dish well filled with bones was in plain view. I took up one of the latter, in order to ascertain its *genus*. The captain kindly informed me that it was the remains of a pig, which it had cost him a great deal of trouble to obtain, as the French view the act of eating pig as very little less heinous than the act of eating a child. Suspicions began to trouble me, and I now turned to look for the head and reproachful eye of the brigadier.

The head was where I had just before

seen it, visible over the top of a trunk; but it was so far raised as to enable me to see that it was still planted on its shoulders. A second look enabled me to distinguish the meditative, philosophical countenance of Dr. Reasono, who was still in the hussar-jacket and petticoat, though, being in the house, he had very properly laid aside the Spanish hat with bedraggled feathers.

A movement followed in the antechamber, and a hurried conversation in a low, earnest tone succeeded. The captain disappeared, and joined the speakers. I listened intently, but could not catch any of the intonations of a dialect founded on the decimal principle. Presently the door opened, and Dr. Etherington stood before me!

The good divine regarded me long and earnestly. Tears filled his eyes, and stretching out both hands towards me, he asked:

"Do you know me, Jack?"

"Know you, dear sir? Why should I not?"

"And do you forgive me, dear boy?"

"For what, sir? I am sure I have most reason to demand your pardon for a thousand follies."

"Ah! the letter—the unkind—the inconsiderate letter!"

"I have not had a letter from you, sir, in a twelvemonth; the last was anything but unkind."

"Though Anna wrote, it was at my dictation."

I passed a hand over my brow, and had dawnings of the truth.

"Anna?"

"Is here—in Paris—and miserable—most miserable!—on your account."

Every particle of monikinity that was left in my system instantly gave way to a flood of human sensations.

"Let me fly to her, dear sir—a moment is an age!"

"Not just yet, my boy. We have much to say to each other, nor is she in this hotel. To-morrow, when both are better prepared, you shall meet."

"Add never to separate, sir, and I will be patient as a lamb."

"Never to separate, I believe it will be better to say."

I hugged my venerable guardian, and found a delicious relief from a most oppressive burden of sensations in a flow of tears.

Dr. Etherington soon led me into a calmer tone of mind. In the course of the day many matters were discussed and settled. I was told that Captain Poke had been a good nurse, though in a sealing fashion; and that the least I could do was to send him back to Stunnin'tun, free of cost. This was agreed to, and the worthy but dogmatical mariner was promised the means of fitting out a new *Debby and Dolly*.

"These philosophers had better be presented to some academy," observed the doctor, smiling, as he pointed to the family of amiable strangers, "being already F. U. D. G. E.'s and H. O. A. X.'s. Mr. Reasono in particular is unfit for ordinary society."

"Do with them as you please, my more than father. Let the poor animals, however, be kept from physical suffering."

"Attention shall be paid to all their wants, both physical and moral."

"And in a day or two we shall proceed to the Rectory?"

"The day after to-morrow, if you have strength."

"And to-morrow?"

"Anna will see you."

"And the next day?"

"Nay, not quite so soon, Jack; but the moment we think you perfectly restored she shall share your fortunes for the remainder of your common probation."

CHAPTER XXX.

EXPLANATIONS—A LEAVE-TAKING—LOVE—CONFESSIONS, BUT NO PENITENCE.

A NIGHT of sweet repose left me refreshed, and with a pulse that denoted less agitation than on the preceding day. I awoke early, had a bath, and sent for Captain Poke to take his coffee with me.

before we parted; for it had been settled, the previous evening, that he was to proceed toward Stunnin'tun forthwith. My old messmate, colleague, co-adventurer, and fellow-traveler was not slow in obeying the summons. I confess his presence was a comfort to me, for I did not like looking at objects that had been so inexplicably replaced before my eyes, unsupported by the countenance of one who had gone through so many grave scenes in my company.

"This has been a very extraordinary voyage of ours, Captain Poke," I remarked, after the worthy sealer had swallowed sixteen eggs, an omelet, seven *cotelettes*, and divers accessories. "Do you think of publishing your private journal?"

"Why, in my opinion, Sir John, the less that either of us says of the v'y'ge the better."

"And why so? We have had the discoveries of Columbus, Cook, Vancouver, and Hudson—why not those of Captain Poke?"

"To own the truth, we sealers do not like to speak of our cruising grounds—and, as for these monikins, after all, what are they good for? A thousand of them wouldn't make a quart of 'ile, and by all account their fur is worth next to nothin'."

"Do you account their philosophy for nothing? and their jurisprudence? you, who were so near losing your head, and who did actually lose your tail, by the ax of the executioner?"

Noah placed a hand behind him, fumbling about the seat of reason, with evident uneasiness. Satisfied that no harm had been done, he very coolly placed half a muffin in what he called his "provision hatchway."

"You will give me this pretty model of our good old *Walrus*, captain?"

"Take it, o' Heaven's sake, Sir John, and good luck to you with it. You, who give me a full-grown schooner, will be but poorly paid with a toy."

"It's as like the dear old craft as one pea is like another!"

"I daresay it may be. I never knew a model that hadn't suthin' of the original in it."

"Well, my good shipmate, we must part. You know I am to go and see the lady who is soon to be my wife, and the *diligence* will be ready to take you to Havre before I return."

"God bless you! Sir John—God bless you!" Noah blew his nose till it rung like a French horn. I thought his little coals of eyes were glittering, too, more than common, most probably with moisture. "You're a droll navigator, and make no more of the ice than a colt makes of a rail. But though the man at the wheel is not always awake the heart seldom sleeps."

"When the *Debby and Dolly* is fairly in the water, you will do me the pleasure of letting me know it."

"Count on me, Sir John. But, before we part, I have a small favor to ask."

"Name it."

Here Noah drew out of his pocket a sort of *basso-relievo* carved in pine. It represented Neptune armed with a harpoon instead of a trident; the captain always contending that the god of the seas should never carry the latter, but that, in its place, he should be armed either with the weapon he had given him, or with a boat-hook. On the right of Neptune was an English gentleman holding out a bag of guineas. On the other was a female who, I was told, represented the goddess of liberty, while it was secretly a rather flattering likeness of Mrs. Poke. The face of Neptune was supposed to have some similitude to that of her husband. The captain, with that modesty which is invariably the companion of merit in the arts, asked permission to have a copy of this design placed on the schooner's stern. It would have been churlish to refuse such a compliment; and I now offered Noah my hand, as the time for parting had arrived. The sealer grasped me rather tightly, and seemed disposed to say more than adieu.

"You are going to see an angel, Sir John."

"How! Do you know anything of Miss Etherington?"

"I should be as blind as an old bumboat else. During our late v'y'ge I saw her often."

"This is strange! But there is evidently something on your mind, my friend; speak freely."

"Well, then, Sir John, talk of anything but of our v'y'ge to the dear crittur. I do not think she is quite prepared yet to hear of all the wonders we saw."

I promised to be prudent; and the captain, shaking me cordially by the hand, finally wished me farewell. There were some rude touches of feeling in his manner which reacted on certain chords in my own system; and he had been gone several minutes before I recollected that it was time to go to the Hotel de Castile. Too impatient to wait for a carriage, I flew along the streets on foot, believing that my own fiery steed would outstrip the zigzag movement of a *fiacre*, or a *cabriolet de place*.

Dr. Etherington met me at the door of his *apartment* and led me to an inner room without speaking. Here he stood gazing for some time in my face with paternal concern.

"She expects you, Jack, and believes that you rang the bell."

"So much the better, dear sir. Let us not lose a moment; let me fly and throw myself at her feet and implore her pardon."

"For what, my good boy?"

"For believing that any social stake can equal that which a man feels in the nearest, dearest ties of earth!"

The excellent rector smiled, but he wished to curb my impatience.

"You have already every stake in society, Sir John Goldencalf," he answered—assuming the air which human beings have by a general convention settled shall be dignified—"that any reasonable man can desire. The large fortune left by your late father raises you, in this respect, to the height of the richest in the land; and now that you are a baronet no one will dispute your claim to participate in the councils of the nation. It would perhaps be better did your creation date a century or two nearer the commencement of the monarchy; but, in this age of innovations, we must take things as they are, and not as we might wish to have them."

I rubbed my forehead, for the doctor had incidentally thrown out an embarrassing idea.

"On your principle, my dear sir, society would be obliged to begin with its great-grandfathers to qualify itself for its own government."

"Pardon me, Jack, if I have said anything disagreeable—no doubt all will come right in heaven. Anna will be uneasy at our delay."

This suggestion drove all recollection of the good doctor's social stake-system, which was exactly the converse of the social-stake system of my late ancestor, quite out of my head. Springing forward, I gave him reason to see that he would have no further trouble in changing the subject. When we had passed an antechamber, he pointed to a door, and admonishing me to be prudent, withdrew.

My hand trembled as it touched the door-knob, but the lock yielded. Anna was standing in the middle of the room (she had heard my footsteps), an image of womanly loveliness, womanly faith, and womanly feeling. By a desperate effort she was, however, mistress of her emotions. Though her pure soul seemed willing to fly to meet me, she obviously restrained the impulse in order to spare my nerves.

"Dear Jack!" and both her soft, white, pretty little hands met me, as I eagerly approached.

"Anna! dearest Anna!" I covered the rosy fingers with kisses.

"Let us be tranquil, Jack, and, if possible, endeavor to be reasonable, too."

"If I thought this could really cost one habitually discreet as you an effort, Anna?"

"One habitually discreet as I is as likely to feel strongly on meeting an old friend as another."

"I think it would make me perfectly happy, could I see thee weep."

As if waiting only for this hint, Anna burst into a flood of tears. I was

frightened, for her sobs became hysterical and convulsed. Those precious sentiments which had been so long imprisoned in her gentle bosom obtained the mastery, and I was well paid for my selfishness by experiencing an alarm little less violent than her own outpouring of feeling.

Touching the incidents, emotions, and language of the next half hour, it is not my intention to be very communicative. Anna was ingenuous, unreserved, and, if I might judge by the rosy blushes that suffused her sweet face, and the manner in which she extricated herself from my protecting arms, I believe I must add, she deemed herself indiscreet in that she had been so unreserved and ingenuous.

"We can now converse more calmly, Jack," the dear creature resumed, after she had erased the signs of emotion from her cheeks; "more calmly, if not more sensibly."

"The wisdom of Solomon is not half so precious as the words I have just heard—and as for the music of the spheres—"

"It is a melody that angels only enjoy."

"And art thou not an angel?"

"No, Jack, only a poor, confiding girl; one instinct with the affections and weaknesses of her sex, and one whom it must be your part to sustain and direct. If we begin by calling each other by these superhuman epithets, we may awake from the delusion sooner than if we commence with believing ourselves to be no other than what we really are. I love you for your kind, excellent, and generous heart, Jack; and as for these poetical beings, they are rather proverbial, I believe, for having no heart at all."

As Anna mildly checked my exaggeration of language—after ten years of marriage I am unwilling to admit there was any exaggeration of idea—she placed her little velvet hand in mine again, smiling away all the severity of the reproof.

"Of one thing I think you may rest perfectly assured, dear girl," I resumed, after a moment's reflection. "All my old opinions concerning expansion and contraction are radically changed. I have carried out the principle of the social-stake system in the extreme, and cannot say that I have been at all satisfied with its success. At this moment I am the proprietor of vested interests which are scattered over half the world. So far from finding that I love my kind any more for all these social stakes, I am compelled to see that the wish to protect one is constantly driving me into acts of injustice against all the others. There is something wrong, depend on it, Anna, in the old dogmas of the political economists."

"I know little of these things, Sir John, but to one ignorant as myself, it would appear that the most certain security for the righteous exercise of power is to be found in just principles."

"If available, beyond a question. They who contend that the debased and ignorant are unfit to express their opinions concerning the public weal, are obliged to own that they can only be restrained by force. Now, as knowledge is power, their first precaution is to keep them ignorant, and then they quote this very ignorance, with all its debasing consequences, as an argument against their participating in authority with themselves. I believe there can be no safe medium between a frank admission of the whole principle—"

"You should remember, dear Goldencalf, that this is a subject on which I know but little. It ought to be sufficient for us that we find things as they are; if change is actually necessary, we should endeavor to effect it with prudence and a proper regard to justice."

Anna while kindly leading me back from my speculations, looked both anxious and pained.

"True—true," I hurriedly rejoined, for a world would not tempt me to prolong her suffering for a moment. "I am foolish and forgetful, to be talking thus at such a moment; but I have endured too much to be altogether unmindful of ancient theories. I thought it might be grateful to you, at least, to know, Anna, that I have ceased to look for happiness in my affections for all, and am only so much the better disposed to turn in search of it to one."

"To love our neighbor as ourself is the latest and highest of the divine commands," the dear girl answered, looking a thousand times more lovely than ever, for my conclusion was very far from being displeasing to her. "I do not know that this object is to be attained by centering in our persons as many of the goods of life as possible; but I do think, Jack, that the heart which loves one truly will be so much the better disposed to entertain kind feelings toward all others."

I kissed the hand she had given me, and we now began to talk a little more like people of the world concerning our movements. The interview lasted an hour longer, when the good doctor interposed and sent me home, to prepare for our return to England.

In a week we were again in the old island. Anna and her father proceeded to the Rectory, while I was left in town, busied with lawyers, and looking after the results of my numerous investments.

Contrary to what many people will be apt to suppose, most of them had been successful; on the whole, I was richer for the adventures, and with such prospects accompanying the risks, I had little difficulty in disposing of them to advantage. The proceeds, together with a large balance of dividends that had accrued during my absence, were lodged with my banker, and I advertised for further landed property.

Knowing the taste of Anna, I purchased one of those town residences which look out on St. James's Park, where the sight of fragrant shrubbery and verdant fields will be constantly before her serene eyes, during the period of what is called a London winter—or from the Easter holidays to midsummer.

I had a long and friendly interview with my Lord Pledge, who was not a man to abandon a ministry, but who continued in place just as active, as respectable, as logical, and useful as ever. Indeed, so conspicuous was he for the third of these qualities, that I caught myself peeping, once or twice, to see if he were actually destitute of a *cauda*. He gave me the comfortable assurance that all had gone on well in Parliament during my absence, politely intimating, at the same time, that he did not believe I had been missed. We settled certain preliminaries together, which will be explained in the next chapter; when I hurried, on the wings of love, alias, in a post-chaise and four, toward the Rectory, and to the sweetest, kindest, gentlest, truest girl in an island which has so many of the sweet, the kind, the gentle, and the true.

CHAPTER XXXI.

BLISS—THE BEST INVESTMENT IN SOCIETY—THE RESULT OF MUCH EXPERIENCE, AND THE END.

THAT day two months found me at the Rectory of Tenthpig, the happiest man in England. The season had advanced to the middle of July, and the shrubbery near the bow-window of my excellent father-in-law's library was in full verdure. The plant, in particular, whose flowers had so well emulated the bloom of Anna's cheek, was rioting in the luxuriance of renewed fertility, its oders stealing gently over the senses of my young wife and myself, as we sat alone, enjoying the holy calm of a fine summer morning, and that delicious happiness which is apt to render the bliss of the first months of a well-assorted union almost palpable.

Anna was seated so near the window that the tints of the rose-bush suffused her spotless robe, rendering her whole figure a perfect picture of that attractive creature the poets have so often sung—a blushing bride. The quiet light had to traverse a wilderness of sweets before it fell on her bland features, every polished lineament of which was eloquent of felicity, and yet, if it be not a contradiction, I would also add, not entirely without the shadow of thought. She was never more lovely, and I had never known her so subdued and tender, as within the last half hour. We had been speaking without reserve of the past, and Anna had just faithfully described the extreme suffering with which she had complied with the command of the good rector, in writing the letter that had so completely unmanned me.

"I ought to have known you better, love, than to suspect you of the act," I rejoined to one of her earnest protestations of regret, and gazing fondly into those eyes which have so much of the serenity, as they have the hues, of heaven. "You never yet were so unkind to one who was offensive; much less could you willingly have plotted this cruelty to one you regard!"

Anna could no longer control herself, but her cheeks were wetted with the usual signs of feeling in her sex. Then smiling in the midst of this little outbreaking of womanly sensibility, her countenance became playful and radiant.

'That letter ought not to be altogether proscribed, neither, Jack. Had it not been written, you would never have visited Leaphigh, nor Leaplow, nor have seen any of those wonderful spectacles which are here recorded."

The dear creature laid her hand on a roll of manuscript which she had just returned to me, after its perusal. At the same time, her face flushed, as vivid and transient feelings are reflected from the features of the innocent and ingenuous, and she made a faint effort to laugh.

I passed a hand over my brow, for whenever this subject is alluded to between us, I invariably feel that there is a species of mistiness in and about the region of thought. I was not displeased, however, for I knew that a heart which loved so truly would not willingly cause me pain, nor would one habitually so gentle and considerate utter a syllable that she might have reason to think would seriously displease.

"Hadst thou been with me, love, that journey would always be remembered as one of the pleasantest events of my life, for, while it had its perils and its disagreeables, it had also its moments of extreme satisfaction."

"You will never be an adept in political saltation, John!"

"Perhaps not—but here is a document that will render it less necessary than formerly."

I threw her a packet which had been received that morning from town, by a special messenger, but of whose contents I had not yet spoken. Anna was too young a wife to open it without an approving look from my fond eye. On glancing over its contents, she perceived that I was raised to the house of peers by the title of Viscount Householder. The purchase of three more boroughs and the influence of my old friend, Lord Pledge, had done it all.

The sweet girl looked pleased, for I believe it is in female nature to like to be a viscountess; but, throwing herself into my arms, she protested that her joy was at my elevation and not at her own.

"I owed you this effort, Anna, as some acknowledgment for your faith and disinterestedness in the affair of Lord M'Dee."

"And yet, Jack, he had neither high cheek-bones nor red hair; and his accent was such as might please a girl less capricious than myself!"

This was said playfully and coquettishly, but in a way to make me feel how near folly would have been to depriving me of a treasure, had the heart I so much prized been less ingenuous and pure. I drew the dear creature to my bosom, as if afraid my rival might yet rob me of my possession. Anna looked up, smiling through her tears; and, making an effort to be calm, she said, in a voice so smothered as to prove how delicate she felt the subject to be—

"We will speak seldom of this journey, dear John, and try to think of the long and dark journey which is yet before us. We will speak of it, however, for there should be nothing totally concealed between us."

I kissed her serene and humid eyes, and repeated what she had just said, syllable for syllable. Anna has not been unmindful of her words; for rarely, indeed, has she touched on the past, and then oftener in allusion to her own sorrows, than in reference to my impressions.

But, while the subject of my voyage to the monikin region is, in a measure, forbidden between me and my wife, there exists no such restraint as between me and other people. The reader may like to

know, therefore, what effect this extraordinary adventure has left on my mind, after an interval of ten years.

There have been moments when the whole has appeared a dream; but, on looking back, and comparing it with other scenes in which I have been an actor, I cannot perceive that it is not quite as indelibly stamped on my memory as these. The facts themselves, moreover, are so very like what I see daily in the course of occurrence around me, that I have come to the conclusion I did go to Leaphigh, in the way related, and that I must have been brought back during the temporary insanity of a fever. I believe, therefore, that there are such countries as Leaphigh and Leaplow; and after much thought, I am of opinion that great justice has here been done to the monikin character in general.

The result of much meditation on what I witness has been to produce sundry material changes in my former opinions, and to unsettle even many of the notions in which I may be said to have been born and bred. In order to consume as little of the reader's time as possible, I shall set down a summary of my conclusions, and then take my leave of him, with many thanks for his politeness in reading what I have written. Before completing my task in this way, however, it will be well to add a word on the subject of one or two of my fellow travelers.

I never could make up my mind relating to the fact whether we did or did not actually eat Brigadier Downright. The flesh was so savory, and it tasted so delicious after a week of philosophical meditation on nuts, and the recollection of its pleasures is so very vivid, that I am inclined to think nothing but a good material dinner could have left behind it impressions so lively. I have had many melancholy thoughts on this subject, especially in November; but observing that men are constantly devouring each other, in one shape or another, I endeavor to make the best of it and to persuade myself that a slight difference in species may exonerate me from the imputation of cannibalism.

I often get letters from Captain Poke. He is not very explicit on the subject of our voyage, it is true; but, on the whole, I have decided that the little ship he constructed was built on the model of, and named after, our own *Walrus*, instead of our own *Walrus* being built on the model of, and named after, the little ship constructed by Captain Poke. I keep the latter, therefore, to show my friends as a proof of what I tell them, knowing the importance of visible testimony with ordinary minds.

As for Bob and the mates, I never heard any more of them. The former most probably continued a "*kickee*," until years and experience enabled him to turn the tables on humanity, when, as is usually the case with Christians, he would be very likely to take up the business of a "kicker," with so much the greater zeal, on account of his early suffering.

To conclude, my own adventures and observations lead to the following inferences, viz.:

That every man loves liberty for his own sake and very few for the sake of other people.

That moral saltation is very necessary to political success at Leaplow, and quite probably in many other places.

That civilization is very arbitrary, meaning one thing in France, another thing at Leaphigh, and still a third in Dorsetshire.

That there is no sensible difference between motives in the polar region and motives anywhere else.

That truth is a comparative and local property, being much influenced by circumstances; particularly by climate and by different public opinions.

That there is no portion of human wisdom so select and faultless that it does not contain the seeds of its own refutation.

That of all the 'ocracies (aristocracy and democracy included) hypocrisy is the most flourishing.

That he who is in the clutches of the law may think himself lucky if he escape with the loss of his tail.

That liberty is a convertible term, which means exclusive privileges in one country,

no privileges in another, and *inclusive* privileges in all.

That religion is a paradox, in which self-denial and humility are proposed as tenets, in direct contradiction to every man's sense.

That *phrenology* and *caudology* are sister sciences, one being quite as demonstrable as the other, and more too.

That philosophy, sound principles, and virtue are really delightful; but, after all, that they are no more than so many slaves of the belly; a man usually preferring to eat his best friend to starving.

That a little wheel and a great wheel are as necessary to the motion of a commonwealth, as to the motion of a stage-coach, and that what this gains in periphery that makes up in activity, on the rotatory principle.

That it is one thing to have a king, another to have a throne, and another to have neither.

That the reasoning which is drawn from particular abuses, is no reasoning for general uses.

That, in England, if we did not use blinkers, our cattle would break our necks; whereas, in Germany we travel at a good pace, allowing the horse the use of his eyes; and in Naples we fly, without even a bit!

That the converse of what has just been said of horses is true of men, in the three countries named.

That occultations of truth are just as certain as the aurora borealis, and quite as easily accounted for.

That men who will not shrink from the danger and toil of penetrating the polar basin, will shrink from the trouble of doing their own thinking, and put themselves, like Captain Poke, under the convoy of a god-like.

That all our wisdom is insufficient to protect us from frauds, one outwitting us by gyrations and flap-jacks, and another by adding new joints to the *cauda*.

That men are not very scrupulous touching the humility due to God, but are so tenacious of their own privileges in this particular, they will confide in plausible rogues rather than in plain-dealing honesty.

That they who rightly appreciate the foregoing facts, are People's Friends, and become the salt of the earth—yea even the Most Patriotic Patriots!

That it is fortunate "all will come right in heaven," for it is certain too much goes wrong on earth.

That the social-stake system has one distinctive merit; that of causing the owners of vested rights to set their own interests in motion, while those of their fellow-citizens must follow, as a matter of course, though perhaps a little clouded by the dust raised by their leaders.

That he who has an Anna, has the best investment in humanity; and that if he has any repetition of his treasure, it is better still.

That money commonly purifies the spirit as wine quenches the thirst; and therefore it is wise to commit all our concerns to the keeping of those who have most of it.

That others seldom regard us in the same light we regard ourselves; witness the manner in which Dr. Reasono converted me from a benefactor into the traveling tutor of Prince Bob.

That honors are sweet even to the most humble, as is shown by the satisfaction of Noah in being made a lord high admiral.

That there is no such stimulant of humanity, as a good moneyed stake in its advancement.

That though the mind may be set on a very improper and base object, it will not fail to seek a good motive for its justification, few men being so hardened in any groveling passion, that they will not endeavor to deceive themselves as well as their neighbors.

That academies promote good-fellowship in knowledge, and good-fellowship in knowledge promotes F. U. D. G. E.'s and H. O. A. X.'s.

That a political rolling-pin, though a very good thing to level rights and privileges, is a very bad thing to level houses, temples, and other matters that might be named.

That the system of governing by proxy is more extended than is commonly sup-

posed ; in one country a king resorting to its use, and in another the people.

That there is no method by which a man can be made to covet a tail, so sure as by supplying all his neighbors, and excluding him by an especial edict.

That the perfection of consistency in a nation, is to dock itself at home, while its foreign agents furiously cultivate *caudæ* abroad.

That names are far more useful than things, being more generally understood, less liable to objections, of greater circulation, besides occupying much less room.

That ambassadors turn the back of the throne outward, aristocrats draw a crimson curtain before it, and a king sits on it.

That nature has created inequalities in men and things, and, as human institutions are intended to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, *ergo,* the laws should encourage natural inequalities as a legitimate consequence.

That, moreover, the laws of nature having made one man wise and another man foolish — this strong, and that weak, human laws should reverse it all, by making *another* man wise and *one* man foolish—*that* strong and *this* weak. On this conclusion I obtained a peerage.

That god-likes are commonly riddles, and riddles, with many people, are, as a matter of course, god-likes.

That the expediency of establishing the base of society on a principle of the most sordid character, one that is denounced by the revelations of God, and proved to be insufficient by the experience of man, may at least be questioned without properly subjecting the dissenter to the imputation of being a sheep-stealer.

That we seldom learn moderation under any political excitement, until forty thousand square miles of territory are blown from beneath our feet.

That it is not an infallible sign of great mental refinement to bespatter our fellow-creatures, while every nerve is writhing in honor of our pigs, our cats, our stocks and our stones.

That select political wisdom, like select schools, propagates much questionable knowledge.

That the whole people is not infallible, neither is a part of the people infallible.

That love for the species is a godlike and pure sentiment ; but the philanthropy which is dependent on buying land by the square mile, and selling it by the square foot, is stench in the nostrils of the just.

That one thoroughly imbued with republican simplicity invariably squeezes himself into a little wheel, in order to show how small he can become at need.

That habit is invincible, an Esquimaux preferring whale's blubber to beefsteak, a native of the Gold Coast cherishing his tom-tom before a band of music, and certain traveled countrymen of our own saying, "Commend me to the English skies."

That arranging a fact by reason is embarrassing, and admits of caviling ; while adapting a reason to a fact is a very natural, easy, every-day, and sometimes necessary, process.

That what men affirm for their own particular interests they will swear to the end, although it should be a proposition as much beyond the necessity of an oath, as that "black is white."

That national allegories exist everywhere, the only difference between them arising from gradations in the richness of imaginations.

And finally :—

That men have more of the habits, propensities, dispositions, cravings, antics, gratitude, flap-jacks, and honesty of monikins, than is generally known.

END OF "THE MONIKINS."

JACK TIER.

PREFACE.

THIS work has already appeared in "Graham's Magazine" under the title of "Rose Budd." The change of name is solely the act of the author, and arises from a conviction that the appellation given in this publication is more appropriate than the one laid aside. The necessity of writing to a name, instead of getting it from the incidents of the book itself, has been the cause of this departure from the ordinary rules.

When this book was commenced, it was generally supposed that the Mexican war would end after a few months of hostilities. Such was never the opinion of the writer. He has ever looked forward to a protracted struggle; and, now that Congress has begun to interfere, sees as little probability of its termination as on the day it commenced. Whence honorable gentlemen have derived their notions of the Constitution, when they advance the doctrine that Congress is an American Aulic council, empowered to encumber the movements of armies, and, as old Blucher expressed it in reference to the diplomacy of Europe, "to spoil with the pen the work achieved by the sword," it is difficult to say more than this, that they do not get them from the Constitution itself. It has generally been supposed that the present executive was created in order to avoid the very evils of a distracted and divided council, which this new construction has a direct tendency to revive. But a presidential election *has* ever proved, and probably *will* ever prove, stronger than any written fundamental law.

We have had occasion to refer often to Mexico in these pages. It has been our aim to do so in a kind spirit; for, while we have never doubted that the factions which have possessed themselves of the government in that country have done us great wrong, wrong that would have justified a much earlier appeal to arms, we have always regarded the class of Mexicans who alone can properly be termed the "people," as mild, amiable, and disposed to be on friendly terms with us. Providence, however, directs all to the completion of its own wise ends. If the crust which has so long encircled that nation, inclosing it in bigotry and ignorance, shall now be irretrievably broken, letting in light, even Mexico herself may have cause hereafter to rejoice in her present disasters. It was in this way that Italy has been, in a manner, regenerated; the conquests of the French carrying in their train the means and agencies which have, at length, aroused that glorious portion of the earth to some of its ancient spirit. Mexico, in certain senses, is the Italy of this continent; and war, however ruthless and much to be deplored, may yet confer on her the inestimable blessings of real liberty, and a religion released from *feux d'artifice*, as well as all other artifices.

A word on the facts of our legend. The attentive observer of men and things has many occasions to note the manner in which ordinary lookers-on deceive themselves as well as others. The species of treason portrayed in these pages is no uncommon occurrence; and it will often be found that the traitor is the loudest in his protestations of patriotism. It is a

pretty safe rule to suspect the man of hypocrisy who makes a parade of his religion, and the partisan of corruption and selfishness who is clamorous about the rights of the people. Captain Spike was altogether above the first vice; though fairly on a level, as respects the second, with divers patriots who live by their deity.

CHAPTER I.

"*Pros.*—Why, that's my spirit!
But was not this nigh shore?
Ariel.—Close by, my master.
Pros.—But are they, Ariel, safe?
Ariel.—Not a hair perished."—TEMPEST.

D'YE hear there, Mr. Mulford!" called out Captain Stephen Spike, of the half-rigged brigantine *Swash*, or *Molly Swash*, as was her registered name, to his mate. "We shall be dropping out as soon as the tide makes, and I intend to get through the Gate, at least, on the next flood. Waiting for a wind in port is lubberly seamanship, for he that wants one should go outside and look for it!"

This call was uttered from a wharf of the renowned city of Manhattan, to one who was in the trunk-cabin of a clipper-looking craft, of the name mentioned, and on the deck of which not a soul was visible. Nor was the wharf—though one of those wooden piers that line the arm of the sea that is called the East River—such a spot as ordinarily presents itself to the mind of the reader, or listener, when an allusion is made to a wharf of that town, which it is the fashion of the times to call the *Commercial* Emporium of America—as if there might very well be an *emporium* of any other character. The wharf in question had not a single vessel of any sort lying at, or indeed, near it, with the exception of the *Molly Swash*. As it actually stood on the eastern side of the town, it is scarcely necessary to say that such a wharf could only be found high up, and at a considerable distance from the usual haunts of commerce. The brig lay more than a mile above the Hook (Corlaer's, of course, is meant—not Sandy Hook), and quite near to the old Almshouse—far above the ship-yards, in fact. It was a solitary place for a vessel in the midst of a crowd. The grum top-chain voice of Captain Spike had nothing there to mingle with, or interrupt its harsh tones, and it instantly brought on deck Harry Mulford, the mate in question, apparently eager to receive his orders.

"Did you hail, Captain Spike?" called out the mate, a tight, well-grown, straight-built, handsome sailor-lad, of two- or three-and-twenty, one full of health, strength, and manliness.

"Hail! If you call straining a man's throat until he's hoarse, hailing, I believe I did. I flatter myself there is not a man north of Hatteras that can make himself heard further in a gale of wind than a certain gentleman who is to be found within a foot of the spot where I stand. Yes, sir, I've been hailing the *Swash* these five minutes, and thankful am I to find some one at last who is on board to answer me."

"What are your orders, Captain Spike?"

"To see all clear for a start as soon as the flood makes. I shall go through the gate on the next young flood, and I hope you'll have all the hands aboard in time. I see two or three of them up at that Dutch beer-house this moment, and can tell 'em, in plain language, if they come here with their beer aboard *them*, they'll have to go ashore again."

"You have an uncommonly sober crew, Captain Spike," answered the young man, with great calmness. "During the whole time I have been with them I have not seen a man among them the least in the wind."

"Well, I hope it will turn out that I've an uncommonly sober mate in the bargain. Drunkenness I abominate, Mr. Mulford, and I can tell you, short meter, that I will not stand it."

"May I inquire if you ever saw me the least in the world under the influence of liquor, Captain Spike?" *demanded* the mate, rather than asked, with a very fixed meaning in his manner.

"I keep no log-book of trifles, Mr. Mulford, and cannot say. No man is worse

for bowsing out of his jib when off duty, though a drunkard's a thing I despise. Well, well — remember, sir, that the *Molly Swash* casts off on the young flood, and that Rose Budd and the good lady, her aunt, take passage in her, this v'y'ge."

"Is it possible that you have persuaded them into that at last?" exclaimed the handsome mate.

"Persuade! It takes no great persuasion, sir, to get the ladies to try their luck in that brig. Lady Washington herself, if she was alive and disposed to a sea-v'y'ge, might be glad of the chance. We've a ladies' cabin, you know, and it's suitable that it should have some one to occupy it. Old Mrs. Budd is a sensible woman, and takes time by the forelock. Rose is ailin'—pulmonary they call it, I believe, and her aunt wishes to try the sea for her constitution—"

"Rose Budd has no more of a pulmonary constitution than I have myself," interrupted the mate.

"Well, that's as people fancy. You must know, Mr. Mulford, they've got all sorts of diseases nowadays, and all sorts of cures for 'em. One sort of a cure for consumption is what they tarm the Hyder-Ally—"

"I think you must mean hydropathy, sir—"

"Well, it's something of the sort, no matter what; but cold water is at the bottom of it, and they *do* say it's a good remedy. Now Rose's aunt thinks if cold water is what is wanted, there is no place where it can be so plenty as out on the ocean. Sea air is good, too, and by taking a v'y'ge her niece will get both requisites together, and cheap."

"Does Rose Budd think herself consumptive, Captain Spike?" asked Mulford, with interest.

"Not she—you know it will never do to alarm a pulmonary, so Mrs. Budd has held her tongue carefully on the subject before the young woman. Rose fancies that her *aunt* is out of sorts, and that the v'y'ge is tried on her account; but the aunt, the cunning thing, knows all about it."

Mulford almost nauseated the expression of his commander's countenance while Spike uttered the last words. At no time was that countenance very inviting, the features being coarse and vulgar, while the color of the entire face was of an ambiguous red, in which liquor and the seasons would seem to be blended in very equal quantities. Such a countenance, lighted up by a gleam of successful management, not to say with hopes and wishes that it will hardly do to dwell on, could not but be revolting to a youth of Harry Mulford's generous feelings, and most of all to one who entertained the sentiments which he was quite conscious of entertaining for Rose Budd. The young man made no reply, but turned his face toward the water, in order to conceal the expression of disgust that he was sensible must be strongly depicted on it.

The river, as the well-known arm of the sea in which the *Swash* was lying is erroneously termed, was just at that moment unusually clear of craft, and not a sail, larger than that of a boat, was to be seen between the end of Blackwell's Island and Corlaer's Hook, a distance of about a league. This stagnation in the movement of the port, at that particular point, was owing to the state of wind and tide. Of the first, there was little more than a southerly air, while the last was about two-thirds ebb. Nearly everything that was expected on that tide, coastwise, and by the way of the Sound, had already arrived, and nothing could go eastward, with that light breeze and under canvas, until the flood made. Of course it was different with the steamers, who were paddling about like so many ducks, steering in all directions, though mostly crossing and recrossing at the ferries. Just as Mulford turned away from his commander, however, a large vessel of that class shoved her bows into the view, doubling the Hook and going eastward. The first glance at this vessel sufficed to drive even Rose Budd momentarily out of the minds of both master and mate, and to give a new current to their thoughts. Spike had been on the point of walking up the wharf, but he now so far changed his purpose as act-

ually to jump on board of the brig and spring up alongside of his mate, on the taffrail, in order to get a better look at the steamer. Mulford, who loathed so much in his commander, was actually glad of this, Spike's rare merit as a seaman forming a sort of attraction that held him, as it might be against his own will, bound to his service.

"What will they do next, Harry?" exclaimed the master, his manner and voice actually humanized, in air and sound at least, by this unexpected view of something new in his calling. "What *will* they do next?"

"I see no wheels, sir, nor any movement in the water astern, as if she were a propeller," returned the young man.

"She's an out-of-the-way sort of a hussy! She's a man-of-war, too—one of Uncle Sam's new efforts."

"That can hardly be, sir. Uncle Sam has but three steamers of any size or force, now the *Missouri* is burned; and yonder is one of them lying at the navy yard, while another is, or was lately, laid up at Boston. The third is in the Gulf. This must be an entirely new vessel, if she belong to uncle Sam."

"New! She's as new as a governor, and they tell me they've got so now that they can choose five or six of *them*, up at Albany, every fall. That craft is sea-going, Mr. Mulford, as any one can tell at a glance. She's none of your passenger-boys."

"That's plain enough, sir—and she's armed. Perhaps she's English, and they've brought her here into this open spot to try some new machinery. Ay, ay, she's about to set her ensign to the navy men at the yard, and we shall see to whom she belongs."

A long, low, expressive whistle from Spike suceeeded this remark, the colors of the steamer going up to the end of a gaff on the sternmost of her schooner-rigged masts, just as Mulford ceased speaking. There was just air enough, aided by the steamer's motion, to open the bunting and let the spectators see the design. There were the stars and stripes as usual, but the last ran perpendicularly instead of in a horizontal direction.

"Revenue, by George!" exclaimed the master as soon as his breath was exhausted in the whistle. "Who would have believed they could screw themselves up to doing such a thing in that bloody service."

"I now remember to have heard that Uncle Sam was building some large steamers for the revenue service, and, if I mistake not, with some new invention to get along with that is neither wheel nor propeller. This must be one of these new craft, brought out here, into open water, just to try her, sir."

"You're right, sir, you're right. As to the natur' of the beast, you see her buntin', and no honest man can want more. If there's anything I *do* hate, it is that flag, with its unnat'ral stripes up and down instead of running in the true old way. I *have* heard a lawyer say, that the revenue flag of this country is unconstitutional, and that a vessel carrying it on the high seas might be sent in for piracy."

Although Harry Mulford was neither Puffendorf nor Grotius, he had too much common sense, and too little prejudice in favor of even his own vocation, to swallow such a theory, had fifty Cherry street lawyers sworn to its justice. A smile crossed his fine, firm-looking mouth, and something very like a reflection of that smile, if smiles *can* be reflected in one's own countenance, gleamed in his fine, large, dark eye.

"It would be somewhat singular, Captain Spike," he said, "if a vessel belonging to any nation should be seized as a pirate. The fact that she is national in character would clear her."

"Then let her carry a national flag, and be d——d to her," answered Spike, fiercely. "I can show you law for what I say, Mr. Mulford. The American flag has its stripes fore and aft by law, and this chap carries his stripes perpendic'lar. If I commanded a cruiser, and fell in with one of these up and down gentry, blast me if I wouldn't just send him into port and try the question in the old almshouse."

Mulford probably did not think it worth

while to argue the point any further, understanding the dogmatism and stolidity of his commander too well to deem it necessary. He preferred to turn to the consideration of the qualities of the steamer in sight, a subject on which, as seamen, they might better sympathize.

"That's a droll-looking revenue cutter, after all, Captain Spike," he said; "a craft better fitted to go in a fleet, as a lookout vessel, than to chase a smuggler inshore."

"And no goer in the bargain! I do not see how she gets along, for she keeps all snug under water; but unless she can travel faster than she does just now, the *Molly Swash* would soon lend her the Mother Carey's chickens of her own wake to amuse her."

"She has the tide against her, just here, sir; no doubt she would do better in still water."

Spike muttered something between his teeth, and jumped down on deck, seemingly dismissing the subject of the revenue entirely from his mind. His old, coarse, authoritative manner returned, and he again spoke to his mate about Rose Budd, her aunt, the "ladies' cabin," the "young flood," and "casting off," as soon as the last made. Mulford listened respectfully, though with a manifest distaste for the instructions he was receiving. He knew his man, and a feeling of dark distrust came over him, as he listened to his orders concerning the famous accommodations he intended to give to Rose Budd, and that "capital old lady, her aunt;" his opinion of "the immense deal of good sea air and a v'y'ge would do Rose," and how comfortable they both would be on board the *Molly Swash*.

"I honor and respect Mrs. Budd, as my captain's lady, you see, Mr. Mulford, and intend to treat her accordin'ly. She knows it—and Rose knows it—and they both declare they'd rather sail with *me*, since sail they must, than with any other ship-master out of America."

"You sailed once with Captain Budd yourself, I think I have heard you say, sir?"

"The old fellow brought me up. I was with him from my tenth to my twentieth year, and then broke adrift to see fashions. We all do that, you know, Mr. Mulford, when we are young and ambitious, and my turn came as well as another's."

"Captain Budd must have been a great deal older than his wife, sir, if *you* sailed with him when a boy," Mulford observed, a little dryly.

"Yes; and I own to forty-eight, though no one would think me more than five or six-and-thirty, to look at me. There was a great difference between old Dick Budd and his wife, as you say, he being about fifty, when he married, and she less than twenty. Fifty is a good age for matrimony, in a man, Mulford; as is twenty in a young woman."

"Rose Budd is not yet nineteen, I have heard her say," returned the mate, with emphasis.

"Youngish, I will own, but that's a fault a liberal-minded man can overlook. Every day, too, will lessen it. Well, look to the cabins, and see all clear for a start. Josh will be down presently with a cartload of stores, and you'll take 'em aboard without delay."

As Spike uttered this order, his foot was on the plank-sheer of the bulwarks, in the act of passing to the wharf again. On reaching the shore, he turned and looked intently at the revenue steamer, and his lips moved as if he were secretly uttering maledictions on her. We say maledictions, as the expression of his fierce ill-favored countenance too plainly showed that they could not be blessings. As for Mulford, there was still something on his mind, and he followed to the gangway ladder and ascended it, waiting for a moment when the mind of his commander might be less occupied to speak. The opportunity soon occurred, Spike having satisfied himself with the second look at the steamer.

"I hope you don't mean to sail again without a second mate, Captain Spike?" he said.

"I do, though, I can tell you. I hate Dickies—they are always in the way, and the captain has to keep just as much of a watch with one as without one."

"That will depend on his quality. You and I have both been Dickies in our time, sir; and my time was not long ago."

"Ay, ay—I know all about it—but you didn't stick to it long enough to get spoiled. I would have no man aboard the *Swash* who made more than two v'y'ges as second officer. As I want no spies aboard my craft, I'll try it once more without a Dickie."

Saying this in a sufficiently positive manner, Captain Stephen Spike rolled up the wharf, much as a ship goes off before the wind, now inclining to the right, and then again to the left. The gait of the man would have proclaimed him a sea-dog to any one acquainted with that animal, as far as he could be seen. The short, squab figure, the arms bent nearly at right angles at the elbow, and working like two fins with each roll of the body; the stumpy, solid legs, with the feet looking in the line of his course and kept wide apart, would all have contributed to the making up of such an opinion. Accustomed as he was to this beautiful sight, Harry Mulford kept his eyes riveted on the retiring person of his commander until it disappeared behind a pile of lumber, waddling always in the direction of the more thickly peopled parts of the town. Then he turned and gazed at the steamer, which, by this time, had fairly passed the brig, and seemed to be actually bound through the Gate. That steamer was certainly a noble-looking craft, but our young man fancied she struggled along through the water heavily. She might be quick at need, but she did not promise as much by her present rate of moving. Still, she was a noble-looking craft, and, as Mulford descended to the deck again, he almost regretted he did not belong to her; or, at least, to anything but the *Molly Swash*.

Two hours produced a sensible change in and around that brigantine. Her people had all came back to duty and, what was very remarkable among seafaring folks, sober to a man. But, as has been said, Spike was a temperance man, as respects all under his orders at least, if not strictly so in practice himself. The crew of the *Swash* was large for a half-rigged brig of only two hundred tons, but, as her spars were very square, and all her gear as well as her mold seemed constructed for speed, it was probable more hands than common were necessary to work her with facility and expedition. After all, there were not many persons to be enumerated among the "people of the *Molly Swash*," as they called themselves; not more than a dozen, including those aft, as well as those forward. A peculiar feature of this crew, however, was the circumstance that they were all middle-aged men, with the exception of the mate, and all thoroughbred sea-dogs. Even Josh, the cabin-boy, as he was called, was an old, wrinkled, gray-headed negro, of near sixty. If the crew wanted a little in the elasticity of youth, it possessed the steadiness and experience of their time of life, every man appearing to know exactly what to do, and when to do it. This, indeed, composed their great merit; an advantage that Spike well knew how to appreciate.

The stores had been brought alongside of the brig in a cart, and were already stowed in their places. Josh had brushed and swept, until the ladies' cabin could be made no neater. This ladies' cabin was a small apartment beneath a trunk which was, ingeniously enough, separated from the main cabin by pantries and double doors. The arrangement was unusual, and Spike had several times hinted that there was a history connected with that cabin; though what the history was, Mulford could never induce him to relate. The latter knew that the brig had been used for a forced trade on the Spanish Main, and had heard something of her deeds in bringing off specie, and proscribed persons, at different epochs in the revolutions of that part of the world, and he had always understood that her present commander and owner had sailed in her, as mate, for many years before he had risen to his present station. Now all was regular in the way of records, bills of sale and other documents; Stephen Spike appearing in both the capacities just named. The register proved that the

brig had been built as far back as the last English war, as a private cruiser, but recent and extensive repairs had made her "better than new," as her owner insisted, and there was no question as to her seaworthiness. It is true the insurance offices blew upon her, and would have nothing to do with a craft that had seen her two-score years and ten; but this gave none who belonged to her any concern, inasmuch as they could scarcely have been underwritten in their trade, let the age of the vessel be what it might. It was enough for them that the brig was safe and exceedingly fast, insurances never saving the lives of the people, whatever else might be their advantages. With Mulford it was an additional recommendation that the *Swash* was usually thought to be of uncommonly just proportions.

By half past two P. M. everything was ready for getting the brigantine under way. Her fore-topsail—or fore-*taw*sail, as Spike called it—was loose, the fasts were singled, and a spring had been carried to a post in the wharf, that was well forward of the starboard bow, and the brig's head turned to the southwest, or down the stream, and consequently facing the young flood. Nothing seemed to connect the vessel with the land but a broad gangway plank, to which Mulford had attached life-lines, with more care than it is usual to meet with on board of vessels employed in short voyages. The men stood about the decks with their arms thrust into the bosoms of their shirts, and the whole picture was one of silent, and possibly of somewhat uneasy expectation. Nothing was said, however; Mulford walking the quarter-deck alone, occasionally looking up the still little tenanted streets of that quarter of the suburbs, as if to search for a carriage. As for the revenue-steamer, she had long before gone through the southern passage of Blackwell's, steering for the Gate.

"Dat's dem, Mr. Mulford," Josh at length cried, from the lookout he had taken in a stern-port, where he could see over the low bulwarks of the vessel. "Yes, dat's dem, sir. I know dat old gray horse dat carries his head so low and sorrowful like, as a horse has a right to do dat has to drag a cab about this big town. My eye! what a horse it is, sir!"

Josh was right, not only as to the gray horse that carried his head "sorrowful like," but as to the cab and its contents. The vehicle was soon on the wharf, and in its door soon appeared the short, sturdy figure of Captain Spike, backing out, much as a bear descends a tree. On top of the vehicle were several light articles of female appliances, in the shape of bandboxes, bags, etc., the trunks having previously arrived in a cart. Well might that over-driven gray horse appear sorrowful, and travel with a lowered head. The cab, when it gave up its contents, discovered a load of no less than four persons besides the driver, all of weight, and of dimensions in proportion, with the exception of the pretty and youthful Rose Budd. Even she was plump and of a well-rounded person; though still light and slender. But her aunt was a fair picture of a ship-master's widow—solid, comfortable, and buxom. Neither was she old nor ugly. On the contrary, her years did not exceed forty; and being well preserved, in consequence of never having been a mother, she might even have passed for thirty-five. The great objection to her appearance was the somewhat indefinite character of her shape, which seemed to blend too many of its charms into one. The fourth person in the fare was Biddy Noon, the Irish servant and *factotum* of Mrs. Budd, who was a pock-marked, red-faced, and red-armed single woman, about her mistress's own age and weight, though less stout to the eye.

Of Rose we shall not stop to say much here. Her deep-blue eye, which was equally spirited and gentle, if one can use such contradictory terms, seemed alive with interest and curiosity, running over the brig, the wharf, the arm of the sea, the two islands, and all near her, including the almshouse, with such a devouring rapidity as might be expected in a town-bred girl, who was setting out on her travels for the first time. Let us be understood; we say town-bred, because

such was the fact; for Rose Budd had been both born and educated in Manhattan, though we are far from wishing to be understood that she was either very well-born, or highly educated. Her station in life may be inferred from that of her aunt, and her education from her station. Of the two, the last was, perhaps, a trifle the highest.

We have said that the fine blue eye of Rose passed swiftly over the various objects near her, as she alighted from the cab, and it naturally took in the form of Harry Mulford, as he stood in the gangway, offering his arm to aid her aunt and herself in passing the brig's side. A smile of recognition was exchanged between the young people as their eyes met, and the color, which formed so bright a charm in Rose's sweet face, deepened, in a way to prove that that color spoke with a tongue and eloquence of its own. Nor was Mulford's cheek mute on the occasion, though he helped the hesitating, half-doubting, half-bold girl along the plank with a steady hand and rigid muscles. As for the aunt, as a captain's widow, she had not felt it necessary to betray any extraordinary emotions in ascending the plank, unless, indeed, it might be those of delight on finding her foot once more on the deck of a vessel.

Something of the same feeling governed Biddy, too; for, as Mulford civilly extended his hand to her also, she exclaimed:

"No fear of me, Mr. Mate—I came from Ireland by wather, and knows all about ships and brigs, I do. If you could have seen the times we had, and the saas we crossed, you'd not think it nadeful to say much to the likes iv me."

Spike had tact enough to understand he would be out of his element in assisting females along that plank, and he was busy in sending what he called "the old lady's dunnage" on board, and in discharging the cabman. As soon as this was done, he sprung into the main-channels, and thence, *via* the bulwarks, on deck, ordering the plank to be hauled aboard. A solitary laborer was paid a quarter to throw off the fasts from the ring-bolts and posts, and everything was instantly in motion to cast the brig loose. Work went on as if the vessel were in haste, and it consequently went on with activity. Spike bestirred himself, giving his orders in a way to denote he had been long accustomed to exercise authority on the deck of a vessel, and knew his calling to its minutiæ. The only ostensible difference between his deportment to-day and on any ordinary occasion, perhaps, was in the circumstance that he now seemed anxious to get clear of the wharf, and that in a way which might have attracted notice in any suspicious and attentive observer. It is possible that such a one was not very distant, and that Spike was aware of his presence; for a respectable-looking, well-dressed, middle-aged man *had* come down one of the adjacent streets, to a spot within a hundred yards of the wharf, and stood silently watching the movements of the brig, as he leaned against a fence. The want of houses in that quarter enabled any person to see this stranger from the deck of the *Swash*, but no one on board her seemed to regard him at all, unless it might be the master.

"Come, bear a hand, my hearty, and toss that bow-fast clear," cried the captain, whose impatience to be off seemed to increase as the time to do so approached nearer and nearer. "Off with it at once, and let her go."

The man on the wharf threw the turns of the hawser clear of the post, and the *Swash* was released forward. A smaller line, for a spring, had been run some distance along the wharfs, ahead of the vessel, and brought in aft. Her people clapped on this, and hove way to their craft, which, being comparatively light, was easily moved, and very manageable. As this was done, the distant spectator, who had been leaning on the fence, moved toward the wharf with a step a little quicker than common. Almost at the same instant, a short, stout, sailor-like looking little person, waddled down the nearest street, seeming to be in somewhat of a hurry, and presently he joined the other stranger, and appeared to enter into con-

versation with him; pointing toward the *Swash* as he did so. All this time, both continued to advance toward the wharf.

In the meanwhile Spike and his people were not idle. The tide did not run very strong near the wharves and in the sort of a bight in which the vessel had lain; but, such as it was, it soon took the brig on her inner bow, and began to cast her head off shore. The people at the spring pulled away with all their force, and got sufficient motion on their vessel to overcome the tide, and to give the rudder an influence. The latter was put hard a-starboard, and helped to cast the brig's head to the southward.

Down to this moment, the only sail that was loose on board the *Swash* was the fore-topsail, as mentioned. This still hung in the gear, but a hand had been sent aloft to overhaul the buntlines and clewlines, and men were also at the sheets. In a minute the sail was ready for hoisting. The *Swash* carried a wapper of a fore-and-aft mainsail, and what is more, it was fitted with a standing gaff, for appearance in port. At sea, Spike knew better than to trust to this arrangement; but in fine weather, and close in with the land, he found it convenient to have this sail haul out and brail like a ship's spanker. As the gaff was now aloft, it was only necessary to let go the brails to loosen this broad sheet of canvas, and to clap on the outhauler, to set it. This was probably the reason why the brig was so unceremoniously cast into the stream, without showing more of her cloth. The jib and flying-jibs, however, did at that moment drop beneath their booms, ready for hoisting.

Such was the state of things as the two strangers came first upon the wharf. Spike was on the taffrail, overhauling the main-sheet, and Mulford was near him, casting the fore-topsail braces from the pins, preparatory to clapping on the halyards.

"I say, Mr. Mulford," asked the captain, "did you ever see either of them chaps afore? These jokers on the wharf, I mean."

"Not to my recollection, sir," answered the mate, looking over the taffrail to examine the parties. "The little one is a burster! The funniest-looking little fat old fellow I've seen in many a day."

"Ay, ay, them fat little bursters, as you call 'em, are sometimes full of the devil. I don't like either of the chaps, and am right glad we are well cast before they got here."

"I do not think either would be likely to do us much harm, Captain Spike."

"There's no knowing, sir. The biggest fellow looks as if he might lug out a silver oar at any moment."

"I believe the silver oar is no longer used, in this country at least," answered Mulford, smiling. "And if it were, what have we to fear from it? I fancy the brig has paid her reckoning."

"She don't owe a cent, nor ever shall for twenty-four hours after the bill is made out, while I own *her*. They call me ready-money Stephen, round among the ship-chandlers and calkers. But I don't like them chaps; and what I don't relish, I never swallow, you know."

"They'll hardly try to get aboard us, sir; you see we are quite clear of the wharf, and the mainsail will take now, if we set it."

Spike ordered the mate to clap on the outhauler, and spread that broad sheet of canvas at once to the little breeze there was. This was almost immediately done, when the sail filled, and began to be felt on the movement of the vessel. Still, that movement was very slow, the wind being so light, and the *vis inertiæ* of so large a body remaining to be overcome. The brig receded from the wharf, almost in a line at right angles to its face, inch by inch, as it might be, dropping slowly up with the tide at the same time. Mulford now passed forward to set the jibs, and to get the topsail on the craft, leaving Spike on the taffrail, keenly eying the strangers, who, by this time, had got down nearly to the end of the wharf, at the berth so lately occupied by the *Swash*. That the captain was uneasy was evident enough, that feeling being exhibited in his countenance, blended with a malignant ferocity.

"Has that brig any pilot?" asked the

larger and better-looking of the two strangers.

"What's that to you, friend?" demanded Spike, in return. "Have you a Hell-Gate branch?"

"I may have one, or I may not. It is not usual for so large a craft to run the Gate without a pilot."

"Oh, my gentleman's below, brushing up his logarithms. We shall have him on deck to take his departure before long, when I'll let him know your kind inquiries after his health."

The man on the wharf seemed to be familiar with this sort of sea-wit, and he made no answer, but continued that close scrutiny of the brig, by turning his eyes in all directions, now looking below, and now aloft, which had in truth occasioned Spike's principal cause for uneasiness.

"Is not that Captain Stephen Spike, of the brigantine *Molly Swash?*" called out the little, dumpling-looking person, in a cracked, dwarfish sort of a voice, that was admirably adapted to his appearance. Our captain fairly started, turned full toward the speaker, regarded him intently for a moment, and gulped the words he was about to utter, like one confounded. As he gazed, however, at little dumpy, examining his bow-legs, red broad cheeks, and coarse snub nose, he seemed to regain his self-command, as if satisfied the dead had not really returned to life.

"Are you acquainted with the gentleman you have named?" he asked, by way of answer. "You speak of him like one who ought to know him."

"A body is apt to know a shipmate. Stephen Spike and I sailed together twenty years since, and I hope to live to sail with him again."

"*You* sail with Stephen Spike? when and where may I ask, and in what v'y'ge, pray?"

"The last time was twenty years since. Have you forgotten little Jack Tier, Captain Spike?"

Spike looked astonished, and well he might, for he had supposed Jack to be dead fully fifteen years. Time and hard service had greatly altered him, but the general resemblance in figure, stature, and waddle, certainly remained. Notwithstanding, the Jack Tier that Spike remembered was quite a different person from this Jack Tier. That Jack had worn his intensely black hair clubbed and curled, whereas this Jack had cut his locks into short bristles, which time had turned into an intense gray. That Jack was short and thick, but he was flat and square; whereas this Jack was just as short, a good deal thicker, and as round as a dumpling. In one thing, however, the likeness still remained perfect. Both Jacks chewed tobacco, to a degree that became a distinct feature in their appearance.

Spike had many reasons for wishing Jack Tier were not resuscitated in this extraordinary manner, and some for being glad to see him. The fellow had once been largely in his confidence, and knew more than was quite safe for any one to remember but himself, while he might be of great use to him in his future operations. It is always convenient to have one at your elbow who thoroughly understands you, and Spike would have lowered a boat and sent it to the wharf to bring Jack off, were it not for the gentleman who was so inquisitive about pilots. Under the circumstances, he determined to forego the advantages of Jack's presence, reserving the right to hunt him up on his return.

The reader will readily enough comprehend that the *Molly Swash* was not absolutely standing still while the dialogue related was going on and the thoughts we have recorded were passing through her master's mind. On the contrary, she was not only in motion, but that motion was gradually increasing, and by the time all was said that has been related, it had become necessary for those who spoke to raise their voices to an inconvenient pitch in order to be heard. This circumstance alone would soon have put an end to the conversation had not Spike's pausing to reflect brought about the same result as mentioned.

In the meantime, Mulford had got the canvas spread. Forthwith, the *Swash* showed all the cloth of a full-rigged brig

even to royals and flying-jib; while aft, her mast was the raking, tall, naked pole of an American schooner. There was a taut topmast, too, to which a gaff-topsail was set, and the gear proved that she could also show, at need, a staysail in this part of her if necessary. As the Gate was before them, however, the people had set none but the plain, manageable canvas.

The *Molly Swash* kept close on the wind, luffing athwart the broad reach she was in until far enough to weather Blackwell's, when she edged off to her course and went through the southern passage. Although the wind remained light and a little baffling, the brig was so easily impelled and was so very handy that there was no difficulty in keeping her perfectly in command. The tide, too, was fast increasing in strength and velocity, and the movement from this cause alone was getting to be sufficiently rapid.

As for the passengers, of whom we have lost sight in order to get the brig under way, they were now on deck again. At first, they had all gone below, under the care of Josh, a somewhat rough groom of the chambers, to take possession of their apartment, a sufficiently neat, and exceedingly comfortable cabin, supplied with everything that could be wanted at sea, and, what was more, lined on two of its sides with state-rooms. It is true, all these apartments were small, and the state-rooms were very low, but no fault could be found with their neatness and general arrangements, when it was recollected that one was on board a vessel.

"Here ebberyt'ing heart can wish," said Josh, exultingly, who, being an old-school black, did not disdain to use some of the old-school dialect of his caste. "Yes, ladies, ebberyt'ing. Let Cap'n Spike alone for dat! He won'erful at accommodation! Not a bed-bug aft—know better dan come here; jest like de people, in dat respects, and keep deir place forrard. You nebber see a pig come on de quarter-deck, nudder."

"You must maintain excellent discipline, Josh," cried Rose, in one of the sweetest voices in the world, which was easily attuned to merriment—"and we are delighted to learn what you tell us. How do you manage to keep up these distinctions and make such creatures know their places so well?"

"Nuttin easier, if you begin right, miss. As for de pig, I teach dem wid scaldin' water. Wheneber I sees a pig come aft, I gets a little water from de copper, and just scald him wid it. You can't t'ink, miss, how dat mend his manners, and make him squeel fuss, and t'ink arter. In dat fashion I soon get de ole ones in good trainin', and den I has no more trouble wid dem as comes fresh aboard; for de ole hog tell de young one, and 'em won'erful cunnin', and know how to take care of 'emself."

Rose Budd's sweet eyes were full of fun and expectation, and she could no more repress her laugh than youth and spirits can always be discreet.

"Yes, with the pigs," she cried, "that might do very well; but how is it with those—other creatures?"

"Rosy, dear," interrupted the aunt, "I wish you would say no more about such shocking things. It's enough for us that Captain Spike has ordered them all to stay forward among the men which is always done on board well-disciplined vessels. I've heard your uncle say, a hundred times, that the quarter-deck was sacred, and that might be enough to keep such animals off it."

It was barely necessary to look at Mrs. Budd in the face to get a very accurate general notion of her character. She was one of those inane, uncultivated beings who seem to be protected by a benevolent Providence in their pilgrimage on earth, for they do not seem to possess the power to protect themselves. Her very countenance expressed imbecility and mental dependence, credulity and a love of gossip. Notwithstanding these radical weaknesses, the good woman had some of the better instincts of her sex, and was never guilty of anything that could properly convey reproach.

She was no monitress for Rose, however, the niece much oftener influencing the aunt, than the aunt influencing the niece.

The latter had been fortunate in having had an excellent instructess, who though incapable of teaching her much in the way of accomplishments, had imparted a great deal that was respectable and useful. Rose had character and strong character, too, as the course of our narrative will show; but her worthy aunt was a pure picture of as much mental imbecility as at all comported with the privileges of self-government.

The conversation about "those other creatures" was effectually checked by Mrs. Budd's horror of the "animals," and Josh was called on deck so shortly after as to prevent its being renewed. The females stayed below a few minutes, to take possession, and then they reappeared on deck, to gaze at the horrors of the Hell-Gate passage. Rose was all eyes, wonder and admiration of everything she saw. This was actually the first time she had ever been on the water, in any sort of craft, though born and brought up in sight of one of the most thronged havens in the world. But there must be a beginning to everything, and this was Rose Budd's beginning on the water. It is true the brigantine was a very beautiful, as well as an exceedingly swift vessel; but all this was lost on Rose, who would have admired a horse-jockey bound to the West Indies, in this the incipient state of her nautical knowledge. Perhaps the exquisite neatness that Mulford maintained about everything that came under his care, and that included everything on deck, or above-board, and about which neatness Spike occasionally muttered an oath, as so much senseless trouble, contributed somewhat to Rose's pleasure; but her admiration would scarcely have been less with anything that had sails, and seemed to move through the water with a power approaching that of volition.

It was very different with Mrs. Budd. She, good woman, had actually made one voyage with her late husband, and she fancied that she knew all about a vessel. It was her delight to talk on nautical subjects, and never did she really feel her great superiority over her niece, so very unequivocally, as when the subject of the ocean was introduced, about which she did know something, and touching which Rose was profoundly ignorant, or as ignorant as a girl of lively imagination could remain with the information gleaned from others.

"I am not surprised you are astonished at the sight of the vessel, Rosy," observed the self-complacent aunt at one of her niece's exclamations of admiration. "A vessel is a very wonderful thing, and we are told what extr'orny beings they are that 'go down to the sea in ships.' But you are to know this is not a ship at all, but only a half-jigger rigged, which is altogether a different thing."

"Was my uncle's vessel, *The Rose in Bloom*, then, very different from the *Swash?*"

"Very different indeed, child! Why, *The Rose in Bloom* was a full-jiggered ship, and had twelve masts—and this is only a half-jiggered brig, and has but two masts. See, you may count them—one—two!"

Harry Mulford was coiling away a top-gallant-brace, directly in front of Mrs. Budd and Rose, and, at hearing this account of the wonderful equipment of the *The Rose in Bloom*, he suddenly looked up, with a lurking expression about his eye that the niece very well comprehended, while he exclaimed, without much reflection, under the impulse of surprise—

"Twelve masts! Did I understand you to say, ma'am, that Captain Budd's ship had twelve masts?"

"Yes, sir, *twelve!* and I can tell you all their names, for I learned them by heart—it appearing to me proper that a shipmaster's wife should know the names of all the masts in her husband's vessel, Do you wish to hear their names, Mr. Mulford?"

Harry Mulford would have enjoyed this conversation to the top of his bent, had it not been for Rose. She well knew her aunt's general weakness of intellect, and especially its weakness on this particular subject, but she would suffer no one to manifest contempt for either, if in her power to prevent it. It is seldom one so young, so mirthful, so ingenuous and

innocent in the expression of her countenance, assumed so significant and rebuking a frown as did pretty Rose Budd when she heard the mate's involuntary exclamation about the "twelve masts." Harry, who was not easily checked by his equals, or any of his own sex, submitted to that rebuking frown with the meekness of a child, and stammered out, in answer to the well-meaning, but weak-minded widow's question—

"If you please, Mrs. Budd—just as you please, ma'am — only twelve is a good many masts" — Rose frowned again — "that is—more than I'm used to seeing —that's all."

"I daresay, Mr. Mulford—for you sail in only a half-jigger; but Captain Budd always sailed in a full-jigger — and *his* full-jiggered ship had just twelve masts; and, to prove it to you, I'll give you the names. First, then, there were the fore, main, and mizzen-masts—"

"Yes — yes — ma'am," stammered Harry, who wished the twelve masts and *The Rose in Bloom* at the bottom of the ocean, since her owner's niece still continued to look coldly displeased—"that's right, I can swear!"

"Very true, sir; and you'll find I am right as to all the rest. Then, there were the fore, main, and mizzen top-masts—they make six, if I can count, Mr. Mulford?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the mate, laughing, in spite of Rose's frowns, as the manner in which the old sea-dog had quizzed his wife became apparent to him. "I see how it is—you are quite right, ma'am—I daresay *The Rose in Bloom* had all these masts, and some to spare."

"Yes, sir—I knew you would be satisfied. The fore, main, and mizzen top-gallant masts make nine—and the fore, main, and mizzen royals make just twelve. Oh, I'm never wrong in anything about a vessel, especially if she is a full-jiggered ship."

Mulford had some difficulty in restraining his smiles each time the full-jigger was mentioned, but Rose's expression of countenance kept him in excellent order—and she, innocent creature, saw nothing ridiculous in the term, though the twelve masts had given her a little alarm. Delighted that the old lady had got through her enumeration of the spars with so much success, Rose cried, in the exuberance of her spirits—

"Well, aunty, for my part, I find a half-jigger vessel so very, very beautiful, that I do not know how I should behave were I to go on board a *full*-jigger."

Mulford turned abruptly away, the circumstance of Rose's making herself ridiculous giving him sudden pain, though he could have laughed at her aunt by the hour.

"Ah, my dear, that is on account of your youth and inexperience; but you will learn better in time. I was just so, myself, when I was of your age, and thought the fore-rafters were as handsome as the squared-jiggers; but soon after I married Captain Budd I felt the necessity of knowing more than I did about ships, and I got him to teach me. He didn't like the business, at first, and pretended I would never learn; but, at last, it came all at once, like, and then he used to be delighted to hear me 'talk ship,' as he called it. I've know him laugh, with his cronies, as if ready to die, at my expertness in sea-terms, for half an hour together; and then he would swear—that was the worst fault your uncle had, Rosy—he *would* swear, sometimes, in a way that frightened me, I do declare!"

"But he never swore at you, aunty?"

"I can't say that he did exactly do that, but he would swear all round me, even if he didn't actually touch me, when things went wrong; but it would have done your heart good to hear him laugh! He had a most excellent heart, just like your own, Rosy, dear; but, for that matter, all the Budds have excellent hearts, and one of the commonest ways your uncle had of showing it was to laugh, particularly when we were together and talking. Oh, he used to delight in hearing me converse, especially about vessels, and never failed to get me at it when he had company. I see his good-natured, excellent-hearted countenance at this moment,

with the tears running down his fat, manly cheeks, as he shook his very sides with laughter. I may live a hundred years, Rosy, before I meet again with your uncle's equal."

This was a subject that invariably silenced Rose. She remembered her uncle herself, and remembered his affectionate manner of laughing at her aunt, and always wished the latter to get her eulogiums on her married as soon as possible, whenever ject was introduced.

is time the *Molly Swash* kept in Spike never took a pilot when d avoid it, and his mind was too ccupied with his duty, in that criti- igation, to share at all in the con- ion of his passengers, though he deavor to make himself agreeable e, by an occasional remark, when rable opportunity offered.

soon as he had worked his brig over the south or weather passage of xwell's, however, there remained for him to do, until she had drifted ugh it, a distance of a mile or more; this gave him leisure to do the honors. pointed out the castellated edifice on kwell's as the new penitentiary, and hamlet of villas, on the other shore, avenswood, though there are neither ds nor ravens to authorize the name. the "Sunswick," which satisfied the afields and Gibbses of the olden time, which distinguished their lofty halls broad lawns, was not elegant enough the cockney tastes of these latter rs, so "wood" must be made to usurp place of cherries and apples, and avens" that of gulls, in order to satisfy cravings. But all this was lost on ike. He remembered the shore as it d been twenty years before, and he saw at it was now, but little did he care for change. On the whole, he rather pre- red the Grecian temples, over which ravens would have been compelled to , had there been any ravens in that ghborhood, to the old-fashioned and hly respectable residences that once one occupied the spot. The point he d understand, however, and on the merits of which he had something to say, was a little further ahead. That, too, had been rechristened—the Hallet's cove of the mariner being converted into Astoria —not the bloody-minded place at the mouth of the Oregon, which has come so near bringing us to blows with "our ancestors in England," as the worthy denizens of that quarter choose to consider themselves still, if one can judge by their language. This Astoria was a very different place, and is one of the many suburban villages that are shooting up, like mushrooms in a night, around the great *Commercial* Emporium. This spot Spike understood perfectly, and it was not likely that he should pass it without communicating a portion of his knowledge to Rose.

"There, Miss Rose," he said, with a didactic sort of air, pointing with his short thick finger at the little bay which was just opening to their view—"there's as neat a cove as a craft need bring up in. That *used to be* a capital place to lie in, to wait for a wind to pass the Gate; but it has got to be most too public for my taste. I'm rural, I tell Mulford, and love to get in out-of-the-way berths with my brig, where she can see salt-meadows and smell the clover. You never catch me down in any of the crowded slips, around the markets, or anywhere in that part of the town, for I *do* love country air. That's Hallet's Cove, Miss Rose, and a pretty anchorage it would be for us, if the wind and tide didn't sarve to take us through the Gate."

"Are we near the Gate, Captain Spike?" asked Rose, the fine bloom on her cheek lessening a little, under the apprehension that formidable name is apt to awaken in the breast of the inexperienced.

"Half a mile, or so. It begins just at the other end of this island, on our larboard hand, and will be all over in about another half mile, or so. It's no such bad place, a'ter all, is Hell Gate, to them that's used to it. I call myself a pilot in Hell Gate, though I *have* no branch."

"I wish, Captain Spike, I could teach you to give that place its proper and polite

name. We call it Whirl Gate altogether now," said the relict.

"Well, that's new to me," cried Spike. "I *have* heard some chicken-mouthed folks say *Hurl* Gate, but this is the first time I ever heard it called Whirl Gate—they'll get it to Whirligig Gate next. I don't think that my old commander, Captain Budd, called the passage anything but honest up-and-down Hell Gate."

"That he did—that he did—and all my arguments and reading could not teach him any better. I proved to him that it was Whirl Gate, as any one can see that it ought to be. It is full of whirlpools, they say, and that shows what nature meant the name to be."

"But, aunty," put in Rose, half reluctantly, half anxious to speak, "what has *gate* to do with whirlpools? You will remember it is called a gate—the gate to that wicked place I suppose is meant."

"Rose, you amaze me! How can *you*, a young woman of only nineteen, stand up for so vulgar a name as Hell Gate!"

"Do you think it as vulgar as Hurl Gate, aunty? To me it always seems the most vulgar to be straining at gnats."

"Yes," said Spike sentimentally, "I'm quite of Miss Rose's way of thinking—straining at gnats is very ill-manners, especially at table. I once knew a man who strained in this way, until I thought he would have choked, though it was with a fly, to be sure; but gnats are nothing but small flies, you know, Miss Rose. Yes, I'm quite of your way of thinking, Miss Rose; it *is* very vulgar to be straining at gnats and flies, more particularly at table. But you'll find no flies or gnats aboard here, to be straining at, or brushing away, or to annoy you. Stand by there, my hearties, and see all clear to run through Hell Gate. Don't let me catch *you* straining at anything, though it should be the fin of a whale!"

The people forward looked at each other, as they listened to this novel admonition, though they called out the customary "Ay, ay, sir," as they went to the sheets, braces, and bowlines. To them the passage of no Hell Gate conveyed the idea of any particular terror, and with the one they were about to enter they were much too familiar to care anything about it.

The brig was now floating fast, with the tide, up abreast of the east end of Blackwell's, and in two or three more minutes she would be fairly in the Gate. Spike was aft, where he could command a view of everything forward, and Mulford stood on the quarter-deck, to look after the head-braces. An old and trustworthy seaman, who acted as a sort of boatswain, had the charge on the forecastle, and was to tend the sheets and tack. His name was Rove.

"See all clear," called out Spike. "D'ye hear there, for'ard! I shall make a half-board in the Gate, if the wind favor us, and the tide prove strong enough to hawse us to wind'ard sufficiently to clear the Pot; so mind your—"

The captain breaking off in the middle of this harangue, Mulford turned his head, in order to see what might be the matter. There was Spike, leveling a spy-glass at a boat that was pulling swiftly out of the north channel, and shooting like an arrow directly athwart the brig's bows into the main passage of the Gate. He stepped to the captain's elbow.

"Just take a look at them chaps, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, handing his mate the glass.

"They seem in a hurry," answered Harry, as he adjusted the glass to his eye, "and will go through the Gate in less time than it will take to mention the circumstance."

"What do you make of them, sir?"

"The little man who calls himself Jack Tier is in the stern-sheets of the boat, for one," answered Mulford.

"And the other, Harry—what do you make of the other?"

"It seems to be the chap who hailed to know if we had a pilot. He means to board us at Riker's Island, and make us pay pilotage, whether we want his services or not."

"Blast him and his pilotage too! Give me the glass"—taking another long look at the boat, which by this time was glanc-

ing rather than pulling, nearly at right angles across his bows. "I want no such pilot aboard here, Mr. Mulford. Take another look at him—here, you can see him, away on the weather bow, already."

Mulford did take another look at him, and this time his examination was longer and more scrutinizing than before.

"It is not easy to cover him with the glass," observed the young man; "the boat seems fairly to fly."

"We're forereaching too near the Hog's Back, Captain Spike," roared the boatswain, from forward.

"Ready about—hard a lee," shouted Spike. "Let all fly, for'ard—help her round, boys, all you can, and wait for no orders! Bestir yourselves—bestir yourselves."

It was time the crew should be in earnest. While Spike's attention had thus been diverted by the boat, the brig had got into the strongest of the current, which, by setting her fast to windward, had trebled the power of the air, and this was shooting her over toward one of the greatest dangers of the passage on a flood tide. As everybody bestirred themselves, however, she was got round and filled on the opposite tack, just in time to clear the rocks. Spike breathed again, but his head was still full of the boat. The danger he had just escaped as Scylla met him as Charybdis. The boatswain again roared to go about. The order was given as the vessel began to pitch in a heavy swell. At the next instant she rolled until the water came on deck, whirled with her stern down the tide, and her bows rose as if she were about to leap out of water. The *Swash* had hit the Pot Rock.

CHAPTER II.

"*Watch.*—If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

"*Dogb.*—Truly, by our office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled; the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company."—MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

WE left the brigantine of Captain Spike in a very critical situation, and the master himself in great confusion of mind. A thorough seaman, this accident would never have happened, but for the sudden appearance of the boat and its passengers; one of whom appeared to be a source of great uneasiness to him. As might be expected, the circumstance of striking a place as dangerous as the Pot Rock in Hell Gate produced a great sensation on board the vessel. This sensation betrayed itself in various ways, and according to the characters, habits, and native firmness of the parties. As for the shipmaster's relict, she seized hold of the mainmast, and screamed so loud and perseveringly as to cause the sensation to extend itself into the adjacent and thriving village of Astoria, where it was distinctly heard by divers of those who dwelt near the water. Biddy Noon had her share in this clamor, lying down on the deck in order to prevent rolling over and possibly to scream more at her leisure, while Rose had sufficient self-command to be silent, though her cheeks lost their color.

Nor was there anything extraordinary in females betraying this alarm, when one remembers the somewhat astounding signs of danger by which these persons were surrounded. There is always something imposing in the swift movement of a considerable body of water. When this movement is aided by whirlpools and the other similar accessories of an interrupted current, it frequently becomes startling, more especially to those who happen to be on the element itself. This is peculiarly the case with the Pot Rock, where, not only does the water roll and roar as if agitated by a mighty wind, but where it even breaks, the foam seeming to glance up stream, in the rapid succession of wave to wave. Had the *Swash* remained in her terrific berth more than a second or two, she would have proved what is termed a "total loss"; but she did not. Happily, the Pot Rock lies so low that it is not apt to fetch up anything of a light draught of water, and the brigantine's fore-foot had just settled on her summit, long enough to cause the vessel to whirl round and make her obeisance to the place, when a succeeding swell lifted her clear, and away she went down stream, rolling as if

scudding in a gale, and, for a moment, under no command whatever.

There lay another danger ahead, or it would be better to say astern, for the brig was drifting stern foremost; and that was in an eddy under a bluff, which bluff lies at an angle in the reach, where it is no uncommon thing for craft to be cast ashore, after they have passed all the more imposing and more visible dangers above. It was in escaping this danger, and in recovering the command of his vessel, that Spike now manifested the sort of stuff of which he was really made, in emergencies of this sort. The yards were all sharp up when the accident occurred, and springing to the lee braces, just as a man winks when his eye is menaced, he seized the weather fore brace with his own hands, and began to round in the yard, shouting out to the man at the wheel to "port his helm" at the same time. Some of the people flew to his assistance, and the yards were not only squared, but braced a little up on the other tack, in much less time than we have taken to relate the evolution. Mulford attended to the main-sheet, and succeeded in getting the boom out in the right direction. Although the wind was in truth very light, the velocity of the drift filled the canvas, and taking the arrow-like current on her lee-bow, the *Swash*, like a frantic steed that is alarmed with the wreck made by his own madness, came under command, and sheered out into the stream again, where she could drift clear of the apprehended danger astern.

"Sound the pumps!" called out Spike to Mulford, the instant he saw he had regained his seat in the saddle. Harry sprung amidships to obey, and the eye of every mariner in that vessel was on the young man, as, in the midst of a death-like silence he performed this all-important duty. It was like the physician's feeling the pulse of his patient before he pronounces on the degree of his danger.

"Well, sir?" cried out Spike, impatiently, as the rod reappeared.

"All right, sir," answered Harry, cheerfully; "the well is nearly empty."

"Hold on a moment longer, and give the water time to find its way amidships, if there be any."

The mate remained perched upon the pump in order to comply, while Spike and his people, who now breathed more freely again, improved the leisure to brace up and haul aft in the new course.

"Biddy," said Mrs. Budd, considerately, during this pause in the incidents, "you needn't scream any longer. The danger seems to be past, and you may get up off the deck now. See I have let go of the mast. The pumps have been sounded, and are found tight."

Biddy, like an obedient and respectful servant, did as directed, quite satisfied if the pumps were tight. It was some little time, to be sure, before she was perfectly certain whether she were alive or not; but, once certain of this circumstance, her alarm very sensibly abated, and she became reasonable. As for Mulford, he dropped the sounding-rod again, and had the same cheering report to make.

"The brig is as tight as a bottle, sir."

"So much the better," answered Spike. "I never had such a whirl in her before in my life, and I thought she was going to stop and pass the night there. That's the very spot on which *The Hussar* frigate was wrecked."

"So I have heard, sir. But she drew so much water that she hit slap against the rock and started a butt. We merely touched on its top with our forefoot and slid off."

This was the simple explanation of the *Swash's* escape, and, everybody being now well assured that no harm had been done, things fell into their old and regular train again. As for Spike, his gallantry, notwithstanding, was upset for some hours, and glad enough was he when he saw all three of his passengers quit the deck to go below. Mrs. Budd's spirits had been so much agitated that she told Rose she would go down into the cabin and rest a few minutes on its sofa. We say sofa, for that article of furnitune, nowadays, is far more common in vessels than it was thirty years ago in the dwellings of the country.

"There, Mulford," growled Spike, pointing ahead of the brig to an object on the water that was about half a mile ahead of them—"there's that bloody boat—d'ye see? I should like of all things to give it the slip. There's a chap in that boat I don't like."

"I don't see how that can be very well done, sir, unless we anchor, repass the Gate at the turn of the tide, and go to sea by the way of Sandy Hook."

"That will never do. I've no wish to be parading the brig before the town. You see, Mulford, nothing can be more innocent and proper than the *Molly Swash*, as you know from having sailed in her these twelve months. You'll give her that character, I'll be sworn?"

"I know no harm of her, Captain Spike, and hope I never shall."

"No, sir—you know no harm of her, nor does any one else. A nursing infant is not more innocent than the *Molly Swash*, or could have a clearer character, if nothing but truth was said of her. But the world is so much given to lying, that one of the old saints, of whom we read in the good book, such as Calvin and John Rogers, would be vilified if he lived in these times. Then, it must be owned, Mr. Mulford, whatever may be the raal innocence of the brig, she has a most desperate wicked look."

"Why, yes, sir—it must be owned she is what we sailors call a wicked-looking craft. But some of Uncle Sam's cruisers have that appearance also."

"I know it—I know it, sir, and think nothing of looks myself. Men are often deceived in me, by *my* looks, which have none of your 'longshore softness about 'em, perhaps; but my mother used to say I was one of the most tender-hearted boys she had ever heard spoken of—like one of the babes in the wood, as it might be. But mankind goes so much by appearances, that I don't like to trust the brig too much afore their eyes. Now, should we be seen in the lower bay, waiting for a wind, or for the ebb-tide to make, to carry us over the bar, ten to one but some philotropic or other would be off with a complaint to the district-attorney that we looked like a slaver, and have us all fetched up to be tried for our lives as pirates. No, no—I like to keep the brig in out-of-the-way places, where she can give no offense to your 'tropics, whether they be philos, or of any other sort."

"Well, sir, we are to the eastward of the Gate, and all's safe. That boat cannot bring us up."

"You forget, Mr. Mulford, the revenue craft that steamed up on the ebb. That vessel must be off Sand's Point by this time, and *she* may hear something to our disparagement from the fellow in the boat, and take it into her smoky head to walk us back to town. I wish we were well to the eastward of that steamer! But there's no use in lamentations. If there is really any danger, it's some distance ahead yet, thank Heaven!"

"You have no fears of the man who calls himself Jack Tier, Captain Spike?"

"None in the world. That feller, as I remember him, was a little bustlin' chap that I kept in the cabin, as a sort of steward's mate. There was neither good nor harm in him, to the best of my recollection. But Josh can tell us all about him. Just give Josh a call."

The best thing in the known history of Spike was the fact that his steward had sailed with him for more than twenty years. Where he had picked up Josh no one could say but Josh and himself, and neither chose to be very communicative on the subject. But Josh had certainly been with him as long as he had sailed the *Swash*, and that was from a time actually anterior to the birth of Mulford.

The mate soon had the negro in the council.

"I say, Josh," asked Spike, "do you happen to remember such a hand aboard here as one Jack Tier?"

"Lor' bless you, yes, sir—'members he as well as I do the pea-soup that was burned, and which you 'trowed all over him, to scald him for punishment."

"I've had to do that so often, to one careless fellow or other, that the circumstance doesn't recall the man. I remember him, but not as clear as I could wish. How long did he sail with us?"

"Sebberal v'y'ge, sir, and got left ashore down on the Main, one night, when 'e boat were obliged to shove off in a hurry. Yes, 'members little Jack right well, I does."

"Did you see the man that spoke us from the wharf, and hailed for this very Jack Tier?"

"I see'd a man, sir, dat was won'erful Jack Tier built like, sir, but I didn't hear the conwersation, habbin' the ladies to 'tend to. But Jack was oncommon short in his floor timbers, sir, and had no length of keel at all. His beam was won'erful for his length, altogether—what you call jolly-boat or bum-boat build, and was only good afore 'e wind, Cap'n Spike."

"Was he good for anything aboard ship, Josh? Worth heaving-to for, should he try to get aboard of us again?"

"Why, sir, I can't say much for him in dat fashion. Jack *was* handy in de cabin, and capital feller to carry soup from the galley, aft. You see, sir, he was so low-rigged that de brig's lurchin' and pitchin' couldn't get him off his pins, and he stood up like a church in de heaviest wea'der. Yes, sir, Jack was right good for *dat*."

Spike mused a moment—then he rolled the tobacco over in his mouth, and added, in the way a man speaks when his mind is made up—

"Ay, ay! I see into the fellow. He'll make a handy lady's maid, and we want such a chap just now. It's better to have an old friend aboard, than to be pickin' up strangers, 'long shore. So, should this Jack Tier come off to us, from any of the islands or points ahead, Mr. Mulford, you'll round-to and take him aboard. As for the steamer, if she will only pass out into the Sound where there's room, it shall go hard with us but I get to the eastward of her, without speaking. On the other hand, should she anchor on this side of the fort I'll not attempt to pass her. There is deep water inside of most of the islands, I know, and we'll try and dodge her in that way, if no better offer. I've no more reason than another craft to fear a government vessel, but the sight of one makes me uncomfortable—that's all."

Mulford shrugged his shoulders and remained silent, perceiving that his commander was not disposed to pursue the subject any further. In the meantime, the brig had passed beyond the influence of the bluff, and was beginning to feel a stronger breeze, that was coming down the wide opening of Flushing Bay. As the tide still continued strong in her favor, and her motion through the water was getting to be four or five knots, there was every prospect of her soon reaching Whitestone, the point where the tides meet, and where it would become necessary to anchor; unless, indeed, the wind, which was now getting to the southward and eastward, should come round more to the south. All this Spike and his mate discussed together, while the people were clearing the decks, and making the preparations that are customary on board a vessel before she gets into rough water.

By this time it was ascertained that the brig had received no damage by her salute of the Pot Rock, and every trace of uneasiness on that account was removed. But Spike kept harping on the boat and "the pilot-looking chap who was in her." As they passed Riker's Island, all hands expected a boat would put off with a pilot, or to demand pilotage; but none came, and the *Swash* now seemed released from all her present dangers, unless some might be connected with the revenue steamer. To retard her advance, however, the wind came out a smart working breeze from the southward and eastward, compelling her to make "long legs and short ones" on her way toward Whitestone.

"This is beating the wind, Rosy dear," said Mrs. Budd, complacently, she and her niece having returned to the deck a few minutes after this change had taken place. "Your respected uncle did a great deal of this in his time, and was very successful in it. I have heard him say that, in one of his voyages between Liverpool and New York, he beat the wind by a whole fortnight, everybody talking of it in the insurance offices, as if it was a miracle."

"Ay, ay, Madam Budd," put in Spike, "I'll answer for that. They're desperate

talkers in and about them there insurance offices in Wall street. Great gossips be they, and they think they know everything. Now just because this brig is a little old or so, and was built for a privateer in the last war, they'd refuse to rate her as even B, No. 2, and my blessing on 'em."

"Yes, B, No. 2, that's just what your dear uncle used to call me, Rosy—his charming B, No. 2, or Betsy, No. 2; particularly when he was in a loving mood. Captain Spike, did you ever beat the wind in a long voyage?"

"I can't say I ever did, Mrs. Budd," answered Spike, looking grimly around to ascertain if any one dared to smile at his passenger's mistake; "especially for so long a pull as from New York to Liverpool."

"Then your uncle used to boast of *The Rose in Bloom's* wearing and attacking. She would attack anything that came in her way, no matter who; and as for wearing, I think he once told me she *would* wear just what she had a mind to, like any human being."

Rose was a little mystified, but she looked vexed at the same time, as if she distrusted all was not right.

"I remember all my sea education," continued the unsuspecting widow, "as if it had been learned yesterday. Beating the wind and attacking ship, my poor Mr. Budd used to say, were nice maneuvers, and required most of his tactics, especially in heavy weather. Did you know, Rosy dear, that sailors weigh the weather, and know when it is heavy and when it is light?"

"I did not, aunt; nor do I understand now how it can very well be done."

"Oh! child, before you have been at sea a week you will learn so many things that are new, and get so many ideas of which you never had any notion before, that you'll not be the same person. My captain had an instrument he called a thermometer, and with that he used to weigh the weather, and then he would write down in a log-book 'to-day, heavy weather,' or to-morrow light weather, just as it happened, and that helped him mightily along with his voyages."

"Mrs. Budd has merely mistaken the name of the instrument—the 'barometer' is what she wished to say," put in Mulford opportunely.

Rose looked grateful as well as relieved. Though profoundly ignorant on these subjects herself, she had always suspected her aunt's knowledge. It was, consequently, grateful to her to ascertain that, in this instance, the old lady's mistake had been so trifling.

"Well, it may have been the barometer, for I know he had them both," resumed the aunt. "Barometer or thermometer, it don't make any great difference; or quadrant, or sextant. They are all instruments, and sometimes he used one, and sometimes another. Sailors take on board the sun, too, and have an instrument for that, as well as one to weigh the weather with. Sometimes they take on board the stars, and the moon, and 'fill their ships with the heavenly bodies,' as I've heard my dear husband say, again and again! But the most curious thing at sea, as all sailors tell me, is crossing the line, and I hope we shall cross the line, Rosy, that you and I may see it."

"What is the line, aunty, and how do vessels cross it?"

"The line, my dear, is a place in the ocean where the earth is divided into two parts, one part being called the North Pole and the other part the South Pole. Neptune lives near this line, and he allows no vessel to go out of one pole into the other without paying it a visit. Never, never!—he would as soon think of living on dry land as think of letting even a canoe pass, without visiting it."

"Do you suppose there is such a being, really, as Neptune, aunty?"

"To be sure I do; he is king of the sea. Why shouldn't there be? The sea must have a king, as well as the land."

"The sea may be a republic, aunty, like this country; then, no king is necessary. I have always supposed Neptune to be an imaginary being."

"Oh, that's impossible—the sea is no republic; there are but two republics,

America and Texas. I've heard that the sea is a highway, it is true—'the highway of nations,' I believe it is called, and that must mean something in particular. But my poor Mr. Budd always told me that Neptune was king of the seas, and *he* was always so accurate, you might depend on everything he said. Why, he called his last Newfoundland dog Neptune; and do you think, Rosy, that your dear uncle would call his dog after an imaginary being—and he a man to beat the wind, and attack ship, and take the sun, moon, and stars aboard! No, no, child; fanciful folks may see imaginary beings, but solid folks see solid beings."

Even Spike was dumfounded at this, and there is no knowing what he might have said, had not an old sea-dog who had just come out of the fore-topmast cross-trees, waddled aft, and, hitching up his trousers with one hand while he touched his hat with the other, said with immovable gravity—

"The revenue steamer has brought up just under the fort, Captain Spike."

"How do you know that, Bill?" demanded the captain, with a rapidity that showed how completely Mrs. Budd and all her absurdities were momentarily forgotten.

"I was up on the fore-topgallant yard sir, a bit ago, just to look to the strap of the jewel-block, which wants some sarvice on it, and I see'd her over the land, blowin' off steam and takin' in her kites. Afore I got out of the cross-trees, she was head to wind under bare poles, and if she hadn't anchored, she was about to do so. I'm sartin' 'twas she, sir, and that she was about to bring up."

Spike gave a long, low whistle, after his fashion, and he walked away from the females, with the air of a man who wanted room to think in. Half a minute later, he called out—

"Stand by to shorten sail, boys. Man fore-clew-garnets, flying-jib down haul, topgallant-sheets, and gaff-topsail gear. In with 'em all, my lads—in with everything, with a will."

An order to deal with the canvas in any way on board ship immediately commands the whole attention of all whose duty it is to attend to such matters, and there was an end of all discourse while the *Swash* was shortening sail. Everybody understood, too, that it was to gain time, and prevent the brig from reaching Throg's Neck sooner than was desirable.

"Keep the brig off," cried out Spike, "and let her wear—we're too busy to tack just now."

The man at the wheel knew very well what was wanted, and he put his helm up, instead of putting it down, as he might have done, without this injunction. As this change brought the brig before the wind, and Spike was in no hurry to luff up on the other tack, the *Swash* soon ran over a mile of the distance she had made, putting her back that much on her way to the Neck. It is out of our power to say what the people on the different craft in sight thought of all this, but an opportunity soon offered of putting them on a wrong scent. A large coasting schooner, carrying everything that would draw on a wind, came sweeping under the stern of the *Swash*, and hailed.

"Has anything happened on board that brig?" demanded her master.

"Man overboard," answered Spike; "you haven't seen his hat, have you?"

"No, no," came back, just as the schooner, in her onward course, swept beyond the reach of the voice. Her people collected together, and one or two ran up the rigging a short distance, stretching their necks, on the lookout for the "poor fellow," but they were soon called down to "bout ship." In less than five minutes, another vessel, a rakish coasting sloop, came within hail.

"Didn't that brig strike the Pot Rock, in passing the Gate?" demanded her captain.

"Ay, ay! and a devil of a rap she got, too."

This satisfied *him;* there being nothing remarkable in a vessel's acting strangely that had hit the Pot Rock at Hell Gate.

"I think we may get in our mainsail on the strength of this, Mr. Mulford," said Spike. "There can be nothing on-

common in a craft's shortening sail, that has a man overboard, and which has hit the Pot Rock. I wonder I never thought of all this before."

"Here is a skiff trying to get alongside of us, Captain Spike," called out the boatswain.

"Skiff be d—d! I want no skiff here."

"The man that calls himself Jack Tier is in her, sir."

"The d—l he is!" cried Spike, springing over to the opposite side of the deck to take a look for himself. To his infinite satisfaction he perceived that Tier was alone in the skiff, with the exception of a negro, who pulled its sculls, and that this was a very different boat from that which had glanced through Hell Gate, like an arrow darting from its bow.

"Luff, and shake your topsails," called out Spike. "Get a rope there to throw to this skiff."

The orders were obeyed, and Jack Tier, with his clothes-bag, was soon on the deck of the *Swash*. As for the skiff and the negro, they were cast adrift, the instant the latter had received his quarter. The meeting between Spike and his quondam steward's mate was a little remarkable. Each stood looking intently at the other, as if to note the changes which time had made. We cannot say that Spike's hard, red, selfish countenance betrayed any great feeling, though such was not the case with Jack Tier's. The last, a lymphatic sort of a person at the best, seemed really a little touched, and he either actually brushed a tear from his eye, or he affected so to do.

"So, you are my old shipmate, Jack Tier, are ye?" exclaimed Spike, in a half-patronizing, half-hesitating way; "and you want to try the old craft ag'in. Give us a leaf of your log, and let me know where you have been this many a day, and what you have been about? Keep the brig off, Mr. Mulford. We are in no particular hurry to reach Throg's, you'll remember, sir."

Tier gave an account of his proceedings, which could have no interest with the reader. His narrative was anything but very clear, and it was delivered in a cracked, octave sort of a voice, such as little dapper people not unfrequently enjoy—tones between those of a man and a boy. The substance of the whole story was this: Tier had been left ashore, as sometimes happens to sailors, and, by necessary connection, was left to shift for himself. After making some vain endeavors to rejoin his brig, he had shipped in one vessel after another until he accidentally found himself in the port of New York at the same time as the *Swash*. He know'd he never should be truly happy again until he could once more get aboard the old hussy, and had hurried up to the wharf, where he understood the brig was lying. As he came in sight, he saw she was about to cast off, and, dropping his clothes-bag, he had made the best of his way to the wharf, where the conversation passed that has been related.

"The gentleman on the wharf was about to take boat, to go through the Gate," continued Tier, "and so I begs a passage of him. He was good-natured enough to wait until I could find my bag, and as soon a'terward as the men could get their grog we shoved off. The *Molly* was just getting in behind Blackwell's as we left the wharf, and, having four good oars, and the shortest road, we came out into the Gate just ahead on you. My eye! what a place that is to go through in a boat, and on a strong flood! The gentleman, who watched the brig as a cat watches a mouse, says you struck on the Pot, as he called it, but I says 'No,' for the *Molly Swash* was never know'd to hit rock or shoal in my time aboard her."

"And where did you quit that gentleman, and what has become of him?" asked Spike.

"He put me ashore on that point above us, where I see'd a nigger with his skiff, who I thought would be willin' to 'arn his quarter by giving me a cast alongside. So here I am, and a long pull I've had to get here."

As this was said, Jack removed his hat and wiped his brow with a handkerchief, which, if it had never seen better days,

had doubtless been cleaner. After this, he looked about him, with an air not entirely free from exultation.

This conversation had taken place in the gangway, a somewhat public place, and Spike beckoned to his recruit to walk aft, where he might be questioned without being overheard.

"What became of the gentleman in the boat, as you call him?" demanded Spike.

"He pulled ahead, seeming to be in a hurry."

"Do you know who he was?"

"Not a bit of it. I never saw the man before, and he didn't tell me his business, sir."

"Had he anything like a silver oar about him?"

"I saw nothing of the sort, Captain Spike, and knows nothing consarning him."

"What sort of a boat was he in, and where did he get it?"

"Well, as to the boat, sir, I *can* say a word, seein' it was so much to my mind, and pulled so wonderful smart. It was a light ship's yawl, with four oars, and came round the Hook just a'ter you had got the brig's head round to the eastward. You must have seen it, I should think, though it kept close in with the wharves, as if it wished to be snug."

"Then the gentleman, as you call him, expected *that* very boat to come and take him off?"

"I suppose so, sir, because it *did* come and take him off. That's all I knows about it."

"Had you no jaw with the gentleman? You wasn't mum the whole time you was in the boat with him?"

"Not a bit of it, sir. Silence and I doesn't agree together long, and so we talked most of the time."

"And what did the stranger say of the brig?"

"Lord, sir, he catechised me like as if I had been a child at Sunday-school. He asked me how long I had sailed in her; what ports we'd visited, and what trade we'd been in. You can't think the sight of questions he put, and how cur'ous he was for the answers."

"And what did you tell him in your answers? You said nothin' about our cali down on the Spanish Main, the time you were left ashore, I hope, Jack?"

"Not I, sir. I played him off surprisin'-ly. He got nothin' to count upon out of me. Though I *do* owe the *Molly Swash* a grudge, I'm not goin' to betray her."

"You owe the *Molly Swash* a grudge! Have I taken an enemy on board her, then?"

Jack started, and seemed sorry he had said so much; while Spike eyed him keenly. But the answer set all right. It was not given, however, without a moment for recollection.

"Oh, you knows what I mean, sir. I owe the old hussy a grudge for having desarted me like; but it's only a love quarrel atween us. The old *Molly* will never come to harm by my means."

"I hope not, Jack. The man that wrongs the craft he sails in can never be a true-hearted sailor. Stick by your ship in all weathers is my rule, and a good rule it is to go by. But what did you tell the stranger?"

"Oh! I told him I'd been six v'y'ges in the brig. The first was to Madagascar—"

"The d—l you did! Was he soft enough to believe that?"

"That's more than I knows, sir. I can only tell you what I *said*; I don't pretend to know how much he *believed*."

"Heave ahead—what next?"

"Then I told him we went to Kamtschatka for gold-dust and ivory."

"Whe-e-ew! What did the man say to that?"

"Why, he smiled a bit, and a'ter that he seemed more cur'ous than ever to hear all about it. I told him my third v'y'ge was to Canton, with a cargo of broom-corn, where we took in salmon and dun-fish for home. A'ter that we went to Norway with ice, and brought back silks and money. Our next run was to the Havana, with salt and 'nips—"

"Nips! What the devil be they?"

"Turnips, you know, sir. We always calls 'em 'nips in cargo. At the Havana I told him we took in leather and jerked

beef, and came home. Oh! he got nothin' from me, Captain Spike, that'll ever do the brig a morsel of harm."

"I am glad of that, Jack. You must know enough of the seas to understand that a close mouth is sometimes better for a vessel than a clean bill of health. Was there nothing said about the revenue steamer?"

"Now you name her, sir, I believe there was. Ay, ay, sir, the gentleman *did* say if the steamer fetched up to the westward of the fort that he should overhaul her without difficulty on this flood."

"That'll do, Jack—that'll do, my honest fellow. Go below and tell Josh to take you into the cabin again as steward's mate. You're rather too Dutch built in your old age to do much aloft."

One can hardly say whether Jack received this remark as complimentary or not. He looked a little glum, for a man may be as round as a barrel and wish to be thought genteel and slender; but he went below in quest of Josh without making any reply.

The succeeding movements of Spike appeared to be much influenced by what he had just heard. He kept the brig under short canvas for near two hours, sheering about in the same place, taking care to tell everything that spoke him that he had lost a man overboard. In this way not only the tide, but the day itself was nearly spent. About the time the former began to lose its strength, however, the fore-course and the mainsail were got on the brigantine, with the intention of working her up toward Whitestone, where the tides meet and near which the revenue steamer was known to be anchored. We say near, though it was, in fact, a mile or two more to the eastward and close to the extremity of the Point.

Notwithstanding these demonstrations of a wish to work to windward, Spike was really in no hurry. He had made up his mind to pass the steamer in the dark, if possible, and the night promised to favor him; but, in order to do this, it might be necessary not to come in sight of her at all; or, at least, not until the obscurity should in some measure conceal his rig and character. In consequence of this plan, the *Swash* made no great progress, even after she had got sail on her, on her old course. The wind lessened, too, after the sun went down, though it still hung to the eastward, or nearly ahead. As the tide gradually lost its force, moreover, the set to windward became less and less until it finally disappeared altogether.

There is necessarily a short reach in this passage, where it is always slack water, so far as current is concerned. This is precisely where the tides meet, or, as has been intimated, at Whitestone, which is somewhat more than a mile to the westward of Throgmorton's Neck, near the point of which stands Fort Schuyler, one of the works recently erected for the defense of New York. Off the pitch of the point, nearly mid channel, had the steamer anchored, a fact of which Spike had made certain, by going aloft himself, and reconnoitering her over the land, before it had got to be too dark to do so. He entertained no manner of doubt that this vessel was in waiting for him, and he well knew there was good reason for it; but he would not return and attempt the passage to sea by way of Sandy Hook. His manner of regarding the whole matter was cool and judicious. The distance to the Hook was too great to be made in such short nights ere the return of day, and he had no manner of doubt he was watched for in that direction, as well as in this. Then he was particularly unwilling to show his craft at all in front of the town, even in the night. Moreover, he had ways of his own for effecting his purposes, and this was the very spot and time to put them in execution.

While these things were floating in his mind, Mrs. Budd and her handsome niece were making preparations for passing the night, aided by Biddy Noon. The old lady was factotum, or factota, as it might be most classical to call her, though we are entirely without authorities on the subject, and was just as self-complacent and ambitious of seawomanship below decks as she had been above board. The effect, however, gave Spike great satisfaction, since it kept her out of sight, and left him

more at liberty to carry out his own plans. About nine, however, the good woman came on deck, intending to take a look at the weather, like a skillful marineress as she was, before she turned in. Not a little was she astonished at what she then and there beheld, as she whispered to Rose and Biddy, both of whom stuck close to her side, feeling the want of good pilotage, no doubt, in strange waters.

The *Molly Swash* was still under her canvas, though very little sufficed for her present purposes. She was directly off Whitestone, and was making easy stretches across the passage, or river, as it is called, having nothing set but her huge fore-and-aft mainsail and the jib. Under this sail she worked like a top, and Spike sometimes fancied she traveled too fast for his purposes, the night air having thickened the canvas, as usual, until it "held the wind as a bottle holds water." There was nothing in this, however, to attract the particular attention of the shipmaster's widow, a sail, more or less, being connected with observation much too critical for her schooling, nice as the last had been. She was surprised to find the men stripping the brig forward, and converting her into a schooner. Nor was this done in a loose and slovenly manner, under favor of the obscurity. On the contrary, it was so well executed that it might have deceived even a seaman under a noonday sun, provided the vessel were a mile or two distant. The manner in which the metamorphosis was made was as follows: the studding-sail booms had been taken off the topsail-yard, in order to shorten it to the eye, and the yard itself was swayed up about half mast, to give it the appearance of a schooner's fore-yard. The brig's real lower yard was lowered on the bulwarks, while her royal yard was sent down altogether, and the topgallant-mast was lowered until the heel rested on the topsail yard, all of which, in the night, gave the gear forward very much the appearance of that of a foretopsail schooner, instead of that of a half-rigged brig, as the craft really was. As the vessel carried a trysail on her foremast, it answered very well, in the dark, to represent a schooner's foresail. Several other little dispositions of this nature were made, about which it might weary the uninitiated to read, but which will readily suggest themselves to the mind of a sailor.

These alterations were far advanced when the females reappeared on deck. They at once attracted their attention, and the captain's widow felt the imperative necessity, as connected with her professional character, of proving the same. She soon found Spike, who was bustling around the deck, now looking around to see that his brig was kept in the channel, now and then issuing an order to complete her disguise.

"Captain Spike, what *can* be the meaning of all these changes? The temper of your vessel is so much altered, that I declare I should not have known her!"

"Is it, by George! Then she is just in the state I want her to be in."

"But why have you done it, and what does it all mean?"

"Oh, *Molly's* going to bed for the night, and she's only undressing herself—that's all."

"Yes, Rosy dear, Captain Spike is right. I remember that my poor Mr. Budd used to talk about *The Rose in Bloom* having her clothes on, and her clothes off, just as if she was a born woman! But don't you mean to navigate at all in the night, Captain Spike? Or will the brig navigate without sails?"

"That's it—she's just as good in the dark, under one sort of canvas, as under another. So, Mr. Mulford, we'll take a reef in that mainsail; it will bring it nearer to the size of our new foresail, and seem more ship-shape and Brister fashion; then I think she'll do, as the night is getting to be rather darkish."

"Captain Spike," said the boatswain, who had been set to look out for that particular change, "the brig begins to feel the new tide, and sets to windward."

"Let her go, then—now is as good a time as another. We've got to run the gauntlet, and the sooner it is done the better."

As the moment seemed propitious, not

only Mulford, but all the people, heard this order with satisfaction. The night was starlight, though not very clear at that. Objects on the water, however, were more visible than those on the land, while those on the last could be seen well enough, even from the brig, though in confused and somewhat shapeless piles. When the *Swash* was brought close by the wind, she had just got into the last reach of the "river," or that which runs parallel with the Neck for nearly a mile, doubling where the Sound expands itself, gradually, to a breadth of many leagues. Still the navigation at the entrance of this end of the Sound was intricate and somewhat dangerous, rendering it indispensable for a vessel of any size to make a crooked course. The wind stood at southeast, and was very scant to lay through the reach with, while the tide was so slack as barely to possess a visible current at that place. The steamer lay directly off the Point, mid-channel, as mentioned, showing lights, to mark her position to anything which might be passing in or out. The great thing was to get by her without exciting her suspicion. As all on board, the females excepted, knew what their captain was at, the attempt was made amid an anxious and profound silence; or, if any one spoke at all, it was only to give an order in a low tone, or its answer in a simple monosyllable.

Although her aunt assured her that everything which had been done already, and which was now doing, was quite in rule, the quick-eyed and quick-witted Rose noted these unusual proceedings, and had an opinion of her own on the subject. Spike had gone forward, and posted himself on the weather-side of the forecastle, where he could get the clearest look ahead, and there he remained most of the time, leaving Mulford on the quarter-deck, to work the vessel. Perceiving this, she managed to get near the mate without attracting her aunt's attention, and at the same time out of ear-shot.

"Why is everybody so still and seemingly so anxious, Harry Mulford?" she asked, speaking in a low tone herself, as if desirous of conforming to a common necessity; "is there any new danger here? I thought the Gate had been passed altogether, some hours ago?"

"So it has. D'ye see that large dark mass on the water, off the Point, which seems almost as huge as the fort, with lights above it? That is a revenue steamer which came out of York a few hours before us. We wish to get past her without being troubled by any of her questions."

"And what do any in this brig care about her questions? They can be answered, surely."

"Ay, ay, Rose—they *may* be answered, as you say, but the answers sometimes are unsatisfactory. Captain Spike, for some reason or other, is uneasy, and would rather not have anything to say to her. He has the greatest aversion to speaking the smallest craft when on a coast."

"And that's the reason he has undressed his *Molly*, as he calls her, that he might not be known."

Mulford turned his head quickly toward his companion, as if surprised by her quickness of apprehension; but he had too just a sense of his duty to make any reply. Instead of pursuing the discourse, he adroitly contrived to change it, by pointing out to Rose the manner in which they were getting on, which seemed to be very successfully.

Although the *Swash* was under much reduced canvas, she glided along with great ease and with considerable rapidity of motion. The heavy night air kept her canvas distended, and the weatherly set of the tide, trifling as it yet was, pressed her up against the breeze, so as to turn all to account. It was apparent enough, by the manner in which objects on the land were passed, that the crisis was fast approaching. Rose rejoined her aunt, in order to await the result, in nearly breathless expectation. At that moment, she would have given the world to be safe on shore. This wish was not the consequence of any constitutional timidity, for Rose was much the reverse from timid, but it was the fruit of a newly awakened and painful, though still vague, suspicion. Happy, thrice happy was it for one of her naturally con-

fiding and guileless nature, that distrust *was* thus opportunely awakened, for she was without a guardian competent to advise and guide her youth, as circumstances required.

The brig was not long in reaching the passage that opened to the Sound. It is probable she did this so much the sooner because Spike kept her a little off the wind, with a view of not passing too near the steamer. At this point the direction of the passage changes at nearly a right angle, the revenue steamer lying on a line with the Neck, and leaving a sort of bay, in the angle, for the *Swash* to enter. The land was somewhat low in all directions but one, and that was by drawing a straight line from the Point, through the steamer, to the Long Island shore. On the latter, and in that quarter, rose a bluff of considerable elevation, with deep water quite near it; and, under the shadows of that bluff, Spike intended to perform his nicest evolutions. He saw that the revenue vessel had let her fires go down, and that she was entirely without steam. Under canvas, he had no doubt of beating her hand over hand, could he once fairly get to windward; and then she was at anchor, and would lose some time in getting under way, should she even commence a pursuit. It was all-important, therefore, to gain as much to windward as possible, before the people of the Government vessel took the alarm.

There can be no doubt that the alterations made on board the *Swash* served her a very good turn on this occasion. Although the night could not be called positively dark, there was sufficient obscurity to render her hull confused and indistinct at any distance, and this so much the more when seen from the steamer outside, or between her and the land. All this Spike very well understood, and largely calculated on. In effect he was not deceived; the lookouts on board the revenue craft could trace little of the vessel that was approaching beyond the spars and sails which rose above the shores, and these seemed to be the spars and sails of a common fore-topsail schooner. As this was not the sort of craft for which they were on the watch, no suspicion was awakened, nor did any reports go from the quarter-deck to the cabin. The steamer had her quarter-watches and officers of the deck, like a vessel of war, the discipline of which was fairly enough imitated; but even a man-of-war may be overreached on an occasion.

Spike was only great in a crisis, and then merely as a seaman. He understood his calling to its minutiæ, and he understood the *Molly Swash* better than he understood any other craft that floated. For more than twenty years had he sailed her, and the careful parent does not better understand the humors of the child than he understood exactly what might be expected from his brig. His satisfaction sensibly increased, therefore, as she stole along the land, toward the angle mentioned, without a sound audible but the gentle gurgling of the water, stirred by the stem, and which sounded like the ripple of the gentlest wave, as it washes the shingle of some placid beach.

As the brig drew nearer to the bluff, the latter brought the wind more ahead, as respected the desired course. This was unfavorable, but it did not disconcert her watchful commander.

"Let her go round, Mr. Mulford," said this pilot-captain, in a low voice; "we are as near in as we ought to go."

The helm was put down, the head sheets started, and away into the wind shot the *Molly Swash*, fore-reaching famously in stays and, of course, gaining so much on her true course. In a minute she was round, and filled on the other tack. Spike was now so near the land that he could perceive the tide was beginning to aid him, and that his weatherly set was getting to be considerable. Delighted at this, he walked aft, and told Mulford to go about again as soon as the vessel had sufficient way to make sure of her in stays. The mate inquired if he did not think the revenue people might suspect something, unless they stood further out toward mid-channel; but Spike reminded him that they would be apt to think the schooner was working up under the southern shore,

because the ebb first made there. This reason satisfied Mulford, and, as soon as they were half-way between the bluff and the steamer, the *Swash* was again tacked, with her head to the former. This maneuver was executed when the brig was about two hundred yards from the steamer, a distance that was sufficient to preserve, under all the circumstances, the disguise she had assumed.

"They do not suspect us, Harry," whispered Spike to his mate. "We shall get to windward of 'em, sartain as the breeze stands. That boatin' gentleman might as well have stayed at home, as for any good his hurry done him, or his employers!"

"Whom do you suppose him to be, Captain Spike?"

"Who? A feller that lives by his own wicked deeds. No matter who he is. An informer, perhaps. At any rate, he is not the man to outwit the *Molly Swash*, and her old, stupid, foolish master and owner, Stephen Spike. Luff, Mr. Mulford, luff. Now's the time to make the most of your leg—luff her up and shake her. She is setting to the windward fast, the ebb is sucking along that bluff like a boy at a molasses hogshead. All she can drift on this tack is clear gain; there is no hurry so long as they are asleep aboard the steamer. That's it—make a half-board at once, but take care and not come round. As soon as we are fairly clear of the bluff, and open the bay that makes up behind it, we shall get the wind more to the southward, and have a fine long leg for the next stretch."

Of course Mulford obeyed, throwing the brig up into the wind and allowing her to set to windward, but filling again on the same tack as ordered. This, of course, delayed her progress toward the land and protracted the agony, but it carried the vessel in the direction she most wished to go, while it kept her not only end on to the steamer, but in a line with the bluff, and consequently in the position most favorably to conceal her true character. Presently the bay mentioned, which was several miles deep, opened darkly toward the south, and the wind came directly out of it, or more to the southward. At this moment the *Swash* was near a quarter of a mile from the steamer, and all that distance dead to windward of her, as the breeze came out of the bay. Spike tacked his vessel himself now, and got her head up so high that she brought the steamer on her lee quarter, and looked away toward the island which lies northwardly from the Point, and quite near to which all vessels of any draught of water are compelled to pass even with the fairest winds.

"Shake the reef out of the mainsail, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, when the *Swash* was fairly in motion again on this advantageous tack. "We shall pass well to windward of the steamer and may as well begin to open our cloth again."

"Is it not a little too soon, sir?" Mulford ventured to remonstrate; "the reef is a large one, and will make a great difference in the size of the sail."

"They'll not see it at this distance. No, no, sir; shake out the reef, and sway away on the topgallant mast rope; I'm for bringing the *Molly Swash* into her old shape again, and make her look handsome once more."

"Do you dress the brig, as well as undress her, o' nights, Captain Spike?" inquired the ship-master's relict, a little puzzled with this fickleness of purpose. "I do not believe my poor Mr. Budd ever did that."

"Fashions change, madam, with the times—ay, ay, sir—shake out the reef, and sway away on that mast-rope, boys, as soon as you have manned it. We'll convart our schooner into a brig again."

As these orders were obeyed, of course a general bustle now took place. Mulford soon had the reef out, and the sail distended to the utmost, while the topgallant-mast was soon up and fidded. The next thing was to sway upon the fore-yard, and get that into its place. The people were busied at this duty, when a hoarse hail came across the water on the heavy night air.

"Brig ahoy!" was the call

"Sway upon that fore-yard," said Spike, unmoved by this summons—"start it, start it at once."

"The steamer hails us, sir," said the mate.

"Not she. She is hailing a brig; we are a schooner yet."

A moment of active exertion succeeded, during which the fore-yard went into its place. Then came a second hail.

"Schooner ahoy!" was the summons this time.

"The steamer hails us again, Captain Spike."

"The devil a bit. We're a brig now, and she hails a schooner. Come, boys, bestir yourselves, and get the canvas on *Molly* for'ard. Loose the fore-course before you quit the yard there, then up aloft and loosen everything you can find."

All was done as ordered, and done rapidly, as is ever the case on board a well-ordered vessel when there is occasion for exertion. That occasion now appeared to exist in earnest; for, while the men were sheeting home the top-sail, a flash of light illuminated the scene, when the roar of a gun came booming across the water, succeeded by the very distinct whistling of its shot. We regret that the relict of the late Captain Budd did not behave exactly as became a shipmaster's widow, under fire. Instead of remaining silent and passive, even while frightened, as was the case with Rose, she screamed quite as loud as she had previously done that very day in Hell Gate. It appeared to Spike, indeed, that practice was making her perfect; and, as for Biddy, the spirit of emulation became so powerful in her bosom, that, if anything, she actually outshrieked her mistress. Hearing this, the widow made a second effort, and fairly recovered the ground some might have fancied she had lost.

"Oh! Captain Spike," exclaimed the agitated widow, "do not, do not—if you love me, do not let them fire again!"

"How am I to help it?" asked the captain, a good deal to the point, though he overlooked the essential fact, that by heaving-to, and waiting for the steamer's boat to board him, he might have prevented a second shot, as completely as if he had the ordering of the whole affair. No second shot was fired, however. As it afterward appeared, the screams of Mrs. Budd and Biddy were heard on board the steamer, the captain of which, naturally enough, supposing that the slaughter must be terrible where such cries had arisen, was satisfied with the mischief he had already done, and directed his people to secure their gun, and go to the capstan-bars, in order to help lift the anchor. In a word, the revenue vessel was getting under way, man-of-war fashion, which means somewhat expeditiously.

Spike understood the sounds that reached him, among which was the call of the boatswain, and he bestirred himself accordingly. Experienced as he was in chases and all sorts of nautical artifices, he very well knew that his situation was sufficiently critical. It would have been so, with a steamer at his heels, in the open ocean; but, situated as he was, he was compelled to steer but one course, and to accept the wind on that course as it might offer. If he varied at all in his direction, it was only in a trifling way, though he did make some of these variations. Every moment was now precious, however, and he endeavored to improve the time to the utmost. He knew that he could greatly outsail the revenue vessel, under canvas, and some time would be necessary to enable her to get up her steam—half an hour at the very least. On that half hour, then, depended the fate of the *Molly Swash*.

"Send the booms on the yards, and set stun'sails at once, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, the instant the more regular canvas was spread forward. "This wind will be free enough for all but the lower stun'sail, and we must drive the brig on."

"Are we not looking up too high, Captain Spike? The Stepping-Stones are ahead of us."

"I know that very well, Mulford. But it's nearly high water, and the brig's in light trim, and we may rub and go. By making a short-cut here, we shall gain a full mile on the steamer; that mile may save us."

"Do you really think it possible to get away from that craft, which can always

make a fair wind of it, in these narrow waters, Captain Spike?"

"One don't know, sir. Nothin' is done without tryin', and by tryin' more is often done than was hoped for. I have a scheme in my head, and Providence may favor me in bringing it about."

Providence! The religionist quarrels with the philosopher, if the latter happen to remove this interposition of a higher Power, even so triflingly as by the intervention of secondary agencies, while the biggest rascal dignifies even his success by such phrases as Providential aid! But it is not surprising men should misunderstand terms, when they make such sad confusion in the acts which these terms are merely meant to represent. Spike had his Providence as well as a priest, and we daresay he often counted on its succor, with quite as rational grounds of dependence as many of the pharisees who are constantly exclaiming, "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these."

Sail was made on board the *Swash* with great rapidity, and the brig made a bold push at the Stepping-Stones. Spike was a capital pilot. He insisted if he could once gain sight of the spar that was moored on those rocks for a buoy, he should run with great confidence. The two lights were of great assistance, of course; but the revenue vessel could see these lights as well as the brig, and *she*, doubtless, had an excellent pilot on board. By the time the studding-sails were set on board the *Swash*, the steamer was aweigh, and her long line of peculiar sails became visible. Unfortunately for men who were in a hurry, she lay so much within the bluff as to get the wind scant, and her commander thought it necessary to make a stretch over to the southern shore before he attempted to lay his course. When he was ready to tack, an operation of some time with a vessel of her great length, the *Swash* was barely visible in the obscurity, gliding off upon a slack bowline at a rate which nothing but the damp night air, the ballast-trim of the vessel, united to her excellent sailing qualities, could have produced with so light a breeze.

The first half hour took the *Swash* completely out of sight of the steamer. In that time, in truth, by actual superiority in sailing, by the greater state of preparation, and by the distance saved by bold navigation, she had gained fully a league on her pursuer. But, while the steamer had lost sight of the *Swash*, the latter kept the former in view, and that by means of a signal that was very portentous. She saw the light of the steamer's chimneys, and could form some opinion of her distance and position.

It was about eleven o'clock, when the *Swash* passed the light at Sand's Point, close in with the land. The wind stood much as it had been. If there was a change at all, it was half a point more to the southward, and it was a little fresher. Such as it was, Spike saw he was getting, in that smooth water, quite eight knots out of his craft, and he made his calculations thereon. As yet, and possibly for half an hour longer, he was gaining, and might hope to continue to gain on the steamer. Then her turn would come. Though no great traveler, it was not to be expected that, favored by smooth water and the breeze, her speed would be less than ten knots, while there was no hope of increasing his own without an increase of the wind. He might be five miles in advance, or six at the most; these six miles would be overcome in three hours of steaming, to a dead certainty, and they might possibly be overcome much sooner. It was obviously necessary to resort to some other expedient than that of dead sailing, if an escape was to be effected.

The sound was now several miles in width, and Spike, at first, proposed to his mate to keep off dead before the wind, and by crossing over to the north shore, let the steamer pass ahead, and continue a bootless chase to the eastward. Several vessels, however, were visible in the middle of the passage, at distances varying from one to three miles, and Mulford pointed out the hopelessness of attempting to cross the sheet of open water, and expect to go unseen by the watchful eyes of the revenue people.

"What you say is true enough, Mr. Mulford," answered Spike, after a moment of profound reflection, "and every foot that they come nearer, the less will be our chance. But here is Hempstead Harbor, a few leagues ahead; if we can reach *that* before the blackguards close, we may do well enough. It is a deep bay, and has high land to darken the view. I don't think the brig could be seen at midnight by anything outside, if she was once fairly up that water a mile or two."

"That is our chance, sir?" exclaimed Mulford, cheerfully. "Ay, ay, I know the spot and everything is favorable—try that, Captain Spike; I will answer for it that we go clear."

Spike did try it. For a considerable time longer he stood on, keeping as close to the land as he thought it safe to run, and carrying everything that would draw. But the steamer was on his heels, evidently gaining fast. Her chimneys gave out flames, and there was every sign that her people were in earnest. To those on board the *Swash* these flames seemed to draw nearer each instant, as indeed was the fact, and just as the breeze came fresher out of the opening in the hills, or the low mountains which surrounded the place of refuge in which they designed to enter, Mulford announced that by aid of the night-glass he could destinguish both sails and hull of their pursuer. Spike took a look and throwing down the instrument in a way to endanger it, he ordered the studding sails taken in. The men went aloft like cats, and worked as if they could stand in air. In a minute or two the *Swash* was under what Mrs. Budd might have called her "attacking" canvas, and was close by the wind, looking on a good leg well up the harbor. The brig seemed to be conscious of the emergency, and glided ahead at capital speed. In five minutes she had shut in the flaming chimneys of the steamer. In five minutes more Spike tacked, to keep under the western side of the harbor, and out of sight as long as possible, and because he thought the breeze drew down fresher where he was than more out in the bay.

All now depended on the single fact whether the brig had been seen from the steamer or not, before she hauled into the bay. If seen, she had probably been watched; if not seen, there were strong grounds for hoping that she might still escape. About a quarter of an hour after Spike hauled up, the burning chimneys came again into view. The brig was then half a league within the bay, with a fine dark background of hills to throw her into shadow. Spike ordered everything taken in but the trysail, under which the brig was left to set slowly over toward the western side of the harbor. He now rubbed his hands with delight, and pointed out to Mulford the circumstance that the steamer kept on her course directly athwart the harbor's mouth! Had she seen the *Swash*, no doubt she would have turned into the bay also. Nevertheless, an anxious ten minutes succeeded, during which the revenue vessel steamed fairly past, and shut in her flaming chimneys again by the eastern headlands of the estuary.

CHAPTER III.

"The western wave was all a-flame,
The day was well-nigh done,
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright sun;
When that strange ship drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun."
—THE ANCIENT MARINER.

AT that hour, on the succeeding morning, when the light of day is just beginning to chase away the shadows of night, the *Molly Swash* became visible within the gloom of the high land which surrounds so much of the bay of Hempstead, under easy sail, backing and filling, in order to keep within her hiding-place, until a look could be had at the state of things without. Half an hour later, she was so near the entrance of the estuary as to enable the lookouts aloft to ascertain that the coast was clear, when Spike ordered the helm to be put up, and the brig to be kept away to her course. At this precise moment, Rose appeared on deck, refreshed by the sleep of a quiet

night, and with cheeks tinged with a color even more delicate than that which was now glowing in the eastern sky, and almost as brilliant.

"We stopped in this bit of a harbor for the night, Miss Rose, that is all," said Spike, observing that his fair passenger was looking about her, in some little surprise, at finding the vessel so near the land, and seemingly so much out of her proper position. "Yes, we always do that when we first start on a v'y'ge, and before the brig gets used to traveling—don't we, Mr. Mulford?"

Mr. Mulford, who knew how hopeless was the attempt to mystify Rose, as one might mystify her credulous and weak-minded aunt, and who had no disposition to deal any way but fairly by the beautiful, and in one sense now helpless young creature before him, did not see fit to make any reply. Offend Spike he did not dare to do, more especially under present circumstances; and mislead Rose he would not. He affected not to hear the question, therefore, but issuing an order about the head-sails, he walked forward as if to see it executed. Rose herself was not under as much restraint as the young mate.

"It is convenient, Captain Spike," she coolly answered for Mulford, "to have stopping-places for vessels that are wearied, and I remember the time when my uncle used to tell me of such matters, very much in the same vein; but it was before I was twelve years old."

Spike hemmed, and he looked a little foolish, but Clench, the boatswain, coming aft to say something to him in confidence, just at that moment, he was enabled to avoid the awkwardness of attempting to explain. This man Clench, or Clinch, as the name was pronounced, was deep in the captain's secrets, far more so than was his mate, and would have been filling Mulford's station at that very time, had he not been hopelessly ignorant of navigation. On the present occasion, his business was to point out to the captain two or three lines of smoke that were visible above the water of the Sound, in the eastern board; one of which he was apprehensive might turn out to be the smoke of the revenue craft, from which they had so recently escaped.

"Steamers are no rarities in Long Island Sound, Clench," observed the captain, leveling his glass at the most suspected of the smokes. "That must be a Providence, or Stonington chap, coming west with the Boston train."

"Either of *them* would have been further west by this time, Captain Spike," returned the doubting but watchful boatswain. "It's a large smoke, and I fear it is the revenue fellow coming back, after having had a look well to the eastward, and satisfying himself that we are not to be had in that quarter."

Spike growled out his assent to the possibility of such a conjecture, and promised vigilance. This satisfied his subordinate for the moment, and he walked forward, or to the place where he belonged. In the meantime the widow came on deck, smiling and snuffing the salt air, and ready to be delighted with anything that was maritime.

"Good-morning, Captain Spike," she cried. "Are we in the offing, yet? You know I desired to be told when we are in the offing, for I intend to write a letter to my poor Mr. Budd's sister, Mrs. Sprague, as soon as we get to the offing."

"What is the offing, aunt?" inquired the handsome niece.

"Why *you* have hardly been at sea long enough to understand me, child, should I attempt to explain. The offing, however, is the place where the last letters are always written to the owners, and to friends ashore. The term comes, I suppose, from the circumstance that the vessel is about to be off, and it is natural to think of those we leave behind at such a moment. I intend to write to your Aunt Sprague, my dear, the instant I hear we are in the offing; and what is more, I intend to make *you* my amanuensis."

"But how will the letter be sent, aunty? I have no more objection to writing than any one else, but I do not see how the letter is to be sent. Really, the sea *is* a curious region, with its stopping-places for the night, and its offing to write letters at!"

"Yes, it's all as you say, Rose—a most remarkable region is the sea! You'll admire it, as I admire it, when you come to know it better; and as your poor uncle admired it, and as Captain Spike admires it, too. As for the letters, they can be sent ashore by the pilot, as letters are always sent."

"But, aunty, there *is* no pilot on the *Swash*—for Captain Spike refused to take one on board."

"Rose! you don't understand what you are talking about! No vessel ever yet sailed without a pilot, if indeed any *can*. It's opposed to the law, not to have a pilot; and now I remember to have heard your dear uncle say it wasn't a voyage if a vessel didn't take away a pilot."

"But if they take them away, aunty, how can they send the letters ashore by them?"

"Poh! poh! child; you don't know what you are saying; but you'll overlook it, I hope, Captain Spike, for Rose is quick, and will soon learn to know better. As if letters couldn't be sent ashore by the pilot, though he was a hundred thousand miles from land. But, Captain Spike, you must let me know when we are about to get off the Sound, for I know that the pilot is always sent ashore with his letters, before the vessel gets off the Sound."

"Yes, yes," returned the captain, a little mystified by the widow, though he knew her so well, and understood her so well—"you shall know, ma'am, when we get off soundings, for I suppose that is what you mean."

"What is the difference? Off the Sound, or off the soundings, of course must mean the same thing. But, Rosy, we will go below and write to your aunt at once, for I see a lighthouse yonder, and lighthouses are always put just off the soundings."

Rose, who always suspected her aunt's nautical talk, though she did not know how to correct it, was not sorry to put an end to it, now, by going below and spreading her own writing materials in readiness to write as the other dictated. Biddy Noon was present, sewing on some of her own finery.

"Now, write as I tell you, Rose," commenced the widow:

"My dear sister Sprague—Here we are, at last, just off the soundings, with lighthouses all around us, and so many capes and islands in sight that it does seem as if the vessel never *could* find its way through them all. Some of these islands must be the West Indies—"

"Aunty, that can *never* be!" exclaimed Rose—"we left New York only yesterday."

"What of that? Had it been old times I grant you several days might be necessary to get a sight of the West Indies, but now, when a letter can be written to a friend in Boston and an answer received in half an hour, it requires no such time to go to the West Indies. Besides, what other islands are there in this part of the world? They can't be England—"

"No—no," said Rose, at once seeing it would be preferable to admit they were the West Indies; so the letter went on:

"Some of these islands must be the West Indies, and it is high time we saw some of them, for we are nearly off the Sound, and the lighthouses are getting to be quite numerous. I think we have already seen four since we left the wharf. But, my dear sister Sprague, you will be delighted to hear how much better Rose's health is already becoming—"

"My health, aunty! Why, I never knew an ill day in my life!"

"Don't tell me that, my darling; I know too well what all these deceptive appearances of health amount to. I would not alarm you for the world, Rosy dear, but a careful parent—and I'm your parent in affection, if not by nature—but a careful parent's eye is not to be deceived. I know you *look* well, but you are ill, my child; though, Heaven be praised, the sea air and hydropathy are already doing you a monstrous deal of good."

As Mrs. Budd concluded, she wiped her eyes, and appeared really glad that her niece had a less consumptive look than when she embarked. Rose sat gazing at her aunt in mute astonishment. She knew how much and truly she was beloved, and that induced her to be more tolerant of

her connection's foibles than even duty demanded. Feeling was blended with her respect, but it was almost too much for her to learn that this long, and in some respects painful voyage, was undertaken on her account, and without the smallest necessity for it. The vexation, however, would have been largely increased, but for certain free communications that had occasionally occurred between her and the handsome mate since the moment of her coming on board the brig. Rose knew that Harry Mulford loved her, too, for he had told her as much with a seaman's frankness; and though she had never let him know that his partiality was returned, her woman's heart was fast inclining toward him, with all her sex's tenderness. This made the mistake of her aunt *tolerable*, though Rose was exceedingly vexed it should ever have occurred.

"Why, my dearest aunt," she cried, "they told me it was on *your* account that this voyage was undertaken."

"I know they did, poor dear Rosy, and that was in order not to alarm you. Some persons of delicate constitutions—"

"But my constitution is not in the least delicate, aunt; on the contrary, it is as good as possible; a blessing for which, I trust, I am truly grateful. I did not know but you might be suffering, though you do look so well, for they all agreed in telling me you had need of a sea voyage."

"I a subject for hydropathy! Why, child, water is no more necessary to me than it is to a cat."

"But going to sea, aunt, is not hydropathy—"

"Don't say that, Rosy; do not say that, my dear. It is hydropathy on a large scale, as Captain Spike says, and when he gets us into blue water, he has promised that you shall have all the benefits of the treatment."

Rose was silent and thoughtful; after which she spoke quickly, like one to whom an important thought had suddenly occurred.

"And Captain Spike, then, was consulted in my case?" she asked.

"He was, my dear, and you have every reason to be grateful to him. He was the first to discover a change in your appearance, and to suggest a sea voyage. Marine hydropathy, he said, he was sure would get you up again; for Captain Spike thinks your constitution good at the bottom, though the high color you have proves too high a state of habitual excitement."

"Was Dr. Monson consulted at all, aunt?"

"Not at all. You know the doctors are all against hydropathy and mesmerism, and the magnetic telegraph, and everything that is new; so we thought it best not to consult him."

"And my Aunt Sprague?"

"Yes, *she* was consulted after everything was settled, and when I knew her notions could not undo what had been already done. But she is a seaman's widow, as well as myself, and has a great notion of the virtue of sea air."

"Then it would seem that Doctor Spike was the principal adviser in my case?"

"I own that he was, Rosy dear. Captain Spike was brought up by your uncle, who has often told me what a thorough seaman he was. 'There's Spike, now,' he said to me one day, 'he can almost make his brig talk'—this very brig, too, your uncle meant, Rosy, and, of course, one of the best vessels in the world to take hydropathy in."

"Yes, aunty," returned Rose, playing with her pen, while her air proved how little her mind was in her words. "Well, what shall I say next to my Aunt Sprague?"

"Rose's health is already becoming *confirmed*," resumed the widow, who thought it best to encourage her niece by as strong terms as she could employ, "and I shall extol hydropathy to the skies, as long as I live. As soon as we reach our port of destination, my dear sister Sprague, I shall write you a line to let you know it, by the magnetic telegraph—"

"But there is no magnetic telegraph on the sea, aunty," interrupted Rose, looking up from the paper, with her clear, serene, blue eyes expressing even *her* surprise at this touch of the relict's ignorance.

"Don't tell me *that*, Rosy, child, when everybody says the sparks will fly round the whole earth, just as soon as they will fly from New York to Philadelphia."

"But they must have something to fly on, aunty; and the ocean will not sustain wires or posts."

"Well, there is no need of being so particular; if there is no telegraph the letter must come by mail. You can say telegraph here, and when your aunt gets the letter the post-mark will tell her how it came. It looks better to talk about telegraphic communications, child."

Rose resumed her pen, and wrote, at her aunt's dictation, as follows: "By the magnetic telegraph, when I hope to be able to tell you that our dear Rose is well. As yet, we both enjoy the ocean exceedingly; but when we get off the Sound, into blue water, and have sent the pilot ashore, or discharged him, I ought to say, which puts me in mind of telling you that a cannon was discharged at us only last night, and that the ball whistled so near me that I heard it as plain as ever you heard Rose's piano."

"Had I not better first tell my Aunt Sprague what is to be done when the pilot is discharged?"

"No; tell her about the cannon that was discharged, first, and about the ball that I heard. I had almost forgot that adventure, which was a very remarkable one, was it not, Biddy?"

"Indeed, missus, and it was! and Miss Rose might put in the letter how we both screamed at that cannon, and might have been heard as plainly, every bit of it, as the ball."

"Say nothing on the subject, Rose, or we shall never hear the last of it. So, darling, you may conclude in your own way, for I believe I have told your aunt all that comes to mind."

Rose did as desired, finishing the epistle in a very few words, for, rightly enough, she had taken it into her head there was no pilot to be discharged, and consequently that the letter would never be sent. Her short but frequent conferences with Mulford were fast opening her eyes, not to say her heart; and she was beginning to see Captain Spike in his true character, which was that of a great scoundrel. It is true that the mate had not long judged his commander quite so harshly, but had rather seen his beautiful brig, and her rare qualities, in her owner and commander, than the man himself; but jealousy had quickened his observation of late, and Stephen Spike had lost sensibly with Harry Mulford within the last week. Two or three times before the young man had thought of seeking another berth, on account of certain distrusts of Spike's occupations; but he was poor, and so long as he remained in the *Swash*, Harry's opportunities of meeting Rose were greatly increased. This circumstance, indeed, was the secret of his still being in the *Molly*, as Spike usually called his craft; the last voyage having excited suspicions that were rather of a delicate nature. Then the young man really loved the brig, which, if she could not be literally made to talk, could be made to do almost everything.

A vessel, and a small vessel, too, is rather contracted as to space; but those who wish to converse can contrive to speak together often, even in such narrow limits. Such had been the fact with Rose Budd and the handsome mate. Twenty times since they sailed, short as that time was, had Mulford contrived to get so near to Rose as to talk with her unheard by others. It is true that he seldom ventured to do this so long as the captain was in sight—but Spike was often below, and opportunities were constantly occurring. It was in the course of these frequent but brief conversations that Harry had made certain dark hints touching the character of his commander, and the known recklessness of his proceedings. Rose had taken the alarm, and fully comprehending her aunt's mental imbecility, her situation was already giving her great uneasiness. She had some undefined hopes from the revenue steamer; though, strangely enough, as it appeared to her, her youngest and most approved suitor betrayed a strong desire to escape from the craft at the very moment he was expressing his apprehensions on account

of her presence in the brig. This contradiction arose from a certain *esprit de corps*, which seldom fails, more or less, to identify the mariner with his ship.

But the writing was finished, and the letter sealed with wax, Mrs. Budd being quite as particular in that ceremony as Lord Nelson, when the females again repaired on deck. They found Spike and his mate sweeping the eastern part of the Sound with their glasses, with a view to look out for enemies; or what to them, just then, was much the same thing, government craft. In this occupation Rose was a little vexed to see that Mulford was almost as much interested as Spike himself, the love of his vessel seemingly overcoming his love for her, if not his love of the right; she knew of no reason, however, why the captain should dread any other vessel, and felt sufficiently provoked to question him a little on the subject, if it were only to let him see that the niece was not as completely his dupe as the aunt. She had not been on deck five minutes, therefore, during which time several expressions had escaped the two sailors touching their apprehensions of vessels seen in the distance, ere she commenced her inquiries.

"And why should we fear meeting with other vessels?" Rose plainly demanded—"here in Long Island Sound, and within the power of the laws of the country?"

"Fear!" exclaimed Spike, a little startled, and a good deal surprised at this straightforward question — "Fear, Miss Rose? You do not think we are afraid, though there are many reasons why we do not wish to be spoken by certain craft that are hovering about. In the first place, you know it is war time—I suppose you know, Madam Budd, that America is at war with Mexico?"

"Certainly," answered the widow, with dignity; "and that is a sufficient reason, Rose, why one vessel should chase, and another should run. If you had heard your poor uncle relate, as I have done, all his chasings and runnings away, in the war times, child, you would understand these things better. Why, I've heard your uncle say that, in some of his long voyages, he has run thousands and thousands of miles, with sails set on both sides, and all over his ship."

"Yes, aunty, and so have I, but that was 'running before the wind,' as he used to call it."

"I s'pose, however, Miss Rose," put in Spike, who saw that the niece would soon get the better of the aunt—"I s'pose, Miss Rose, that you'll acknowledge that America is at war with Mexico?"

"I am sorry to say that such is the fact, but I remember to have heard you say, yourself, Captain Spike, when my aunt was induced to undertake this voyage, that you did not consider that there was the smallest danger from any Mexicans."

"Yes, you did, Captain Spike," added the aunt—"you did say there was no danger from Mexicans."

"Nor is there a bit, Madam Budd, if Miss Rose and your honored self will only hear me. There is no danger, because the brig has the heels of anything Mexico can send to sea. She has sold her steamers, and as for anything else under her flag, I would not care a straw"

"The steamer from which we ran, last evening, and which actually fired off a cannon at us, was not Mexican, but American," said Rose, with a pointed manner that put Spike on his trumps.

"Oh, that steamer," he stammered—"that was a race—only a race, Miss Rose, and I wouldn't let her come near me, for the world. I should never hear the last of it, in the insurance offices, and on 'Change, did I let *her* overhaul us. You see, Miss Rose—you see, Madam Budd"—Spike ever found it most convenient to address his mystifying discourse to the aunt, in preference to addressing it to the niece—"you see, Madam Budd, the master of that craft and I are old cronies—sailed together when boys, and set great store by each other. We met only last evening, just a'ter I had left your own agreeable mansion, Madam Budd, and says he, 'Spike, when do you sail?' 'To-morrow's flood, Jones,' says I—his name is Jones—Peter Jones, and as good a fellow as ever lived. 'Do you go by the Hook, or by Hell Gate.'"

"Hurl Gate, Captain Spike, if you please—or Whirl Gate, which some people think is the true sound; but the other way of saying it is awful."

"Well, the captain, my old master, always called it Hell Gate, and I learned the trick of him—"

"I know he did, and so do all sailors: but genteel people, nowadays, say nothing but Hurl Gate, or Whirl Gate."

Rose smiled at this, as did Mulford; but neither said anything, the subject having once before been up between them. As for ourselves, we are still so old-fashioned as to say, and write, Hell Gate, and intend so to do, in spite of all the Yankees that have yet passed through it, or who ever shall pass through it, and that is saying a great deal. We do not like changing names to suit their uneasy spirits.

"Call the place Hurl Gate, and go on with your story," said the widow, complacently.

"Yes, Madam Budd—'Do you go by the Hook, or by Whirl Gate?' said Jones. 'By Whirl-a-Gig-Gate,' says I. 'Well,' says he, 'I shall go through the Gate myself, in the course of the morning. We may meet somewhere to the eastward. and, if we do, I'll bet you a beaver,' says he, 'that I show you my stern.' 'Agreed,' says I, and we shook hands upon it. That's the whole history of our giving the steamer the slip, last night, and of my not wishing to let her speak me."

"But you went into a bay, and let her go past you," said Rose, coolly enough as to manner, but with great point as to substance. "Was not that a singular way of winning a race?"

"It does seem so, Miss Rose, but it's all plain enough, when understood. I found that steam was too much for sails, and I stood up into the bay to let them run past us, in hopes they would never find out the trick. I care as little for a hat as any man, but I do care a good deal about having it reported on 'Change that the *Molly* was beat, by even a steamer."

This ended the discourse for a moment, Clench again having something to say to to his captain in private.

"How much of that explanation am I to believe, and how much disbelieve?" asked Rose the instant she was left alone with Harry. "If it be all invention, it was a ready and ingenious story."

"No part of it is true. He no more expected that the steamer would pass through Hell Gate than I expected it myself. There was no bet, or race, therefore; but it was our wish to avoid Uncle Sam's cruiser, that was all."

"And why should *you* wish any such thing?"

"On my honor, I can give you no better reason, so far as I am concerned, than the fact that, wishing to keep clear of her, I do not like to be overhauled. Nor can I tell you why Spike is so much in earnest in holding the revenue vessel at arm's length; I know he dislikes all such craft, as a matter of course, but I can see no particular reason for it just now. A more innocent cargo was never stuck into a vessel's hold."

"What is it?"

"Flour; and no great matter of that. The brig is not half full, being just in beautiful ballast trim, as if ready for a race. I can see no sufficient reason, beyond native antipathy, why Captain Spike should wish to avoid any craft, for it is humbug his dread of a Mexican, and least of all, here, in Long Island Sound. All that story about Jones, is a tub for whales."

"Thank you for the allusion; my aunt and myself being the whales."

"You know I do mean—*can* mean nothing, Rose, that is disrespectful to either yourself or your aunt."

Rose looked up, and she looked pleased. Then she mused in silence, for some time, when she again spoke.

"Why have you remained another voyage with such a man, Harry?" she asked, earnestly.

"Because, as his first officer, I have had access to your house, when I could not have had it otherwise, and because I have apprehended that he might persuade Mrs. Budd, as he had boasted to me it was his intention to do, to make this voyage."

Rose now looked grateful; and deeply grateful did she feel, and had reason to

feel. Harry had concealed no portion of his history from her. Like herself, he was a shipmaster's child, but one better educated and better connected than was customary for the class. His father had paid a good deal of attention to the youth's early years, but had made a seaman of him, out of choice. The father had lost his all, however, with his life, in a shipwreck; and Harry was thrown upon his own resources, at the early age of twenty. He had made one or two voyages as a second mate, when chance threw him in Spike's way, who, pleased with some evidences of coolness and skill, that he had shown in a foreign port, on the occasion of another loss, took him as his first officer; in which situation he had remained ever since, partly from choice and partly from necessity. On the other hand, Rose had a fortune; by no means a large one, but several thousands in possession, from her own father, and as many more in reversion from her uncle. It was his money, taken in connection with the credulous imbecility of the aunt, that had awakened the cupidity and excited the hopes of Spike. After a life of lawless adventure, one that had been checkered by every shade of luck, he found himself growing old, with his brig growing old with him, and little besides his vessel and the sort of half cargo that was in her hold. Want of means, indeed, was the reason that the flour-barrels were not more numerous.

Rose heard Mulford's explanation favorably, as indeed she heard most of that which came from him, but did not renew the discourse, Spike's conference with the boatswain just then terminating. The captain now came aft, and began to speak of the performances of his vessel in a way to show that he took great pride in them.

"We are traveling at the rate of ten knots, Madam Budd," he said exultingly, "and that will take us clear of the land before night shuts in ag'in. Montauk is a good place for an offing; I ask for no better."

"Shall we then have *two* offings, this voyage, Captain Spike?" asked Rose, a little sarcastically. "If we are in the offing now, and are to be in the offing when we reach Montauk, there must be two such places."

"Rosy, dear, you amaze me!" put in the aunt. "There is no offing until the pilot is discharged, and when he's discharged there is nothing but offing. It's all offing. On the Sound is the first great change that befalls a vessel as she goes to sea; then comes the offing; next the pilot is discharged — then — then—what comes next, Captain Spike?"

"Then the vessel takes her departure—an old navigator like yourself, Madam Budd, ought not to forget the departure."

"Quite true, sir. The departure is a very important portion of a seaman's life. Often and often have I heard my poor dear Mr. Budd talk about his departures. His departures, and his offings, and his—"

"Land-falls," said Spike, perceiving that the shipmaster's relict was a little at fault.

"Thank you, sir; the hint is quite welcome. His land-falls, also, were often in his mouth.

"What is a land-fall, aunty?" inquired Rose. "It appears a strange term to be used by one who lives on the water."

"Oh! there is no end to the curiosities of sailors! A 'land-fall,' my dear, means a shipwreck, of course. To fall on the land, and a very unpleasant fall it is, when a vessel should keep on the water. I've heard of dreadful land-falls in my day, in which hundreds of souls have been swept into eternity, in an instant."

"Yes, yes, Madam Budd—there are such accidents, truly, and serious things be they to encounter," answered Spike, hemming a little to clear his throat, as was much his practice whenever the widow ran into any unusually extravagant blunder; "yes, serious things to encounter. But the land-fall that I mean is a different sort of thing; being, as you well know, what we say when we come in *sight* of land, a'ter a v'y'ge; or, meaning the land we may happen first to see. The departure is the beginning of our calculation when we lose sight of the last cape or headland, and the land-fall closes it by letting us know where we are at the other

end of our journey, as you probably remember."

"Is there not such a thing as clearing out in navigation?" asked Rose, quickly, willing to cover a little confusion that was manifest in her aunt's manner.

"Not exactly in navigation, Miss Rose; but clearing out, with honest folks, ought to come first, and navigation a'terward. Clearing out means going through the custom-house, accordin' to law."

"And the *Molly Swash* has cleared out, I hope?"

"Sartain—a more lawful clearance was never given in Wall Street; it's for Key West, and a market. I did think of making it Havana and a market, but port-charges are lightest at Key West."

"Then Key West is the place to which we are bound?"

"It ought to be, agreeable to papers; though vessels sometimes miss the ports for which they clear."

Rose put no more questions; and her aunt being conscious that she had not appeared to advantage in the affair of the "land-fall," was also disposed to be silent. Spike and Mulford had their attention drawn to the vessel, and the conversation dropped.

The reader can readily suppose that the *Molly Swash* had not been standing still all this time. So far from this, she was running "down Sound," with the wind on her quarter, or at southwest, making great headway, as she was close under the south shore, or on the island side of the water she was in. The vessel had no other motion than that of her speed, and the females escaped everything like seasickness, for the time being. This enabled them to attend to making certain arrangements necessary to their comforts below, previously to getting into rough water. In acquitting herself of this task, Rose received much useful advice from Josh, though his new assistant, Jack Tier, turned out to be a prize indeed, in the cabins. The first was only a steward; but the last proved himself not only a handy person of his calling, but one full of resources—a genius, in his way. Josh soon became so sensible of his own inferiority, in contributing to the comforts of females, that he yielded the entire management of the "ladies' cabin," as a little place that might have been ten feet square was called, to his uncouth-looking, but really expert deputy. Jack waddled about below as if born and brought up in such a place, and seemed every way fitted for his office. In height and in build generally there was a surprising conformity between the widow and the steward's deputy, a circumstance which might induce one to think they must often have been in each other's way, in a space so small; though, in point of fact, Jack never ran foul of any one. He seemed to avoid this inconvenience by a species of nautical instinct.

Toward the turn of the day, Rose had everything arranged, and was surprised to find how much room she had made for her aunt and herself, by means of Jack's hints, and how much more comfortable it was possible to be, in that small cabin, than she had at first supposed.

After dinner, Spike took his siesta. He slept in a little state-room that stood on the starboard side of the quarter-deck, quite aft; as Mulford did in one on the larboard. These two state-rooms were fixtures; but a light deck overhead, which connected them, shipped and unshipped, forming a shelter for the man at the wheel, when in its place, as well as for the officer of the watch, should he see fit to use it, in bad weather. This sort of cuddy, Spike termed his "coach-house."

The captain had no sooner gone into his state-room, and closed its windows, movements that were understood by Mulford, than the latter took occasion to intimate to Rose, by means of Jack Tier, the state of things on deck, when the young man was favored with the lady's company.

"He has turned in for his afternoon's nap, and will sleep for just one hour, blow high or blow low," said the mate, placing himself at Rose's side on the truck, which formed the usual seat for those who could presume to take the liberty of sitting down on the quarter-deck. "It's a habit with him, and we can count on it with perfect security."

"His doing so, now, is a sign that he has no immediate fears of the revenue steamer?"

"The coast is quite clear of her. We have taken good looks at every smoke, but can see nothing that appears like our late companion. She has doubtless gone to the eastward, on duty, and merely chased us on her road."

"But *why* should she chase us at all?"

"Because we ran. Let a dog run, or a man run, or a cat run, and ten to one but something starts in chase. It is human nature, I believe, to give chase; though I admit there was something suspicious about that steamer's movements—her anchoring off the fort, for instance. But let her go for the present; are you getting things right, and to your mind, below decks?"

"Very much so. The cabin is small, and the two staterooms the merest drawers that ever were used, but by putting everything in its place, we have made sufficient room, and no doubt shall be comfortable."

"I am sorry you did not call on us for assistance. The mate has a prescriptive right to help stow away."

"We made out without your services," returned Rose, slightly blushing. "Jack Tier, as he is called, Josh's assistant, is a very useful person, and has been our adviser and manager. I want no better for such services."

"He is a queer fellow, all round. Take him altogether, I hardly ever saw so droll a being! As thick as he's long, with a waddle like a duck, a voice that is cracked, hair like bristles, and knee high; the man might make a fortune as a show. Tom Thumb is scarcely a greater curiosity."

"He is a singular build, as you call it," returned Rose, laughing, "but I can assure you that he is a most excellent fellow in his way—worth a dozen of Josh. Do you know, Harry, that I suspect he has strong feelings towards Captain Spike; but whether of like or dislike, friendship or enmity, I am at a loss to say."

"And why do you think that he has any feeling at all? I have heard Spike say he left the fellow ashore somewhere down on the Spanish Main, or in the Islands, quite twenty years since; but a sailor would scarcely carry a grudge so long a time for such a thing as that."

"I do not know—but feeling there is, and much of it, too; though, whether hostile or friendly, I will not undertake to say."

"I'll look to the chap, now you tell me this. It is a little odd, the manner in which he got on board us, taken in connection with the company he was in, and a discovery may be made. Here he is, however; and, as I keep the keys of the magazine, he can do us no great harm, unless he scuttles the brig."

"Magazine! Is there such a thing here?"

"To be sure there is, and ammunition enough in it to keep eight carronades in lively conversation for a couple of hours."

"A carronade is what you call a gun, is it not?"

"A piece of a one—being somewhat short, like your friend, Jack Tier, who is shaped a good deal like a carronade."

Rose smiled—nay, half laughed, for Harry's pleasantries almost took the character of wit in her eyes, but she did not the less resume her inquiries.

"Guns! And where are they, if they be on this vessel?"

"Do not use such a lubberly expression, my dear Rose, if you respect your father's profession. *On* a vessel, is a new-fangled Americanism, that is neither fish, flesh, nor red-herring, as we sailors say—neither English nor Greek."

"What should I say then? My wish is not to parade sea-talk, but to use it correctly when I use it at all."

"The expression is hardly 'sea-talk,' as you call it, but everyday English—that is, when rightly used. *On* a vessel is no more English than it is nautical—no sailor ever used such an expression."

"Tell me what I ought to say, and you will find me a willing, if not an apt scholar. I am certain of having often read it in the newspapers, and that quite lately."

"I'll answer for that, and it's another proof of its being wrong. *In* a vessel is as correct as *in* a coach, and *on* a vessel as

wrong as can be; but you can say *on board* a vessel though not 'on the boards of a vessel,' as Mrs. Budd has it."

"Mr. Mulford!"

"I beg a thousand pardons, Rose, and will offend no more—though she does make some very queer mistakes."

"My aunt thinks it an honor to my uncle's memory to be able to use the language of his professional life: and if she does sometimes make mistakes that are absurd, it is with motives so respectable that no sailor should deride them."

"I am rebuked forever. Mrs. Budd may call the anchor a silver spoon, hereafter, without my even smiling. But if the aunt has this kind remembrance of a seaman's life, why cannot the niece think equally well of it?"

"Perhaps she does," returned Rose, smiling again—"seeing all its attractions through the claims of Captain Spike."

"I think half the danger from him gone, now that you seem so much on your guard. What an odious piece of deception, to persuade Mrs. Budd that you were fast falling into a decline!"

"One so odious, that I shall surely quit the brig at the first port we enter, or even in the first suitable vessel that we may speak."

"And Mrs. Budd—could you persuade her to such a course?"

"You scarce know us, Harry Mulford. My aunt commands where there is no serious duty to perform; but we change places when there is. I can persuade her to anything that is right in ten minutes."

"You might persuade a world!" cried Harry, with strong admiration expressed in his countenance; after which he began to converse with Rose on a subject so interesting to themselves that we do not think it prudent to relate any more of the discourse, forgetting all about the guns.

About four o'clock of a fine summer's afternoon, the *Swash* went through the Race on the last of the ebb, and with a staggering southwest wind. Her movement by the land, just at that point, could not have been less than at the rate of fifteen miles in the hour. Spike was in high spirits, for his brig had got on famously that day, and there was nothing in sight to the eastward. He made no doubt, as he had told his mate, that the steamer had gone into the Vineyard Sound, and that she was bound over the shoals.

"They want to make political capital out of her," he added, using one of the slang phrases that the "business habits" of the American people are so rapidly incorporating with the common language of the country. "They want to make political capital out of her, Harry, and must show her off to the Boston folks, who are full of notions. Well, let them turn her to as much account in that way as they please, so long as they keep her clear of the *Molly*. Your sarvant, Madam Budd"—addressing the widow, who just at that moment came on deck—"a fine a'ternoon, and likely to be a clear night to run off the coast in."

"Clear nights are desirable, and most of all at sea, Captain Spike," returned the relict, in her best, complacent manner, "whether it be to run *off* a coast or to run *on* a coast. In either case, a clear night or a bright moon must be useful."

Captain Spike rolled his tobacco over in his mouth, and cast a furtive glance at the mate, but he did not presume to hazard any further manifestations of his disposition to laugh.

"Yes, Madam Budd," he answered, "it is quite as you say; and I am only surprised where you have picked up so much of what I call useful nautical knowledge."

"We live and learn, sir. You will recollect that this is not my first voyage, having made one before, and that I passed a happy, happy thirty years in the society of my poor dear husband, Rose's uncle. One must have been dull, indeed, not to have picked up, from such a companion, much of a calling that was so dear to him, and the particulars of which were so very dear to him. He actually gave me lessons in the 'sea-dialect,' as he called it, which probably is the true reason I am so accurate and general in my acquisitions."

"Yes, Madam Budd—yes—hem—yes, you are wonderful in that way. We shall

soon get an offing now, Madam Budd—yes, soon get an offing now."

"And take in our departure, Captain Spike," added the widow, with a very intelligent smile.

"Yes, take our departure. Montauk is yonder, just coming in sight; only some three hours' run from this spot. When we get there the open ocean will lie before us; and give me the open sea, and I'll not call the king my uncle."

"Was he your uncle, Captain Spike?"

"Only in a philanthropic way, Madam Budd. Yes, let us get a good offing, and a rapping to'gallant breeze, and I do not think I should care much for *two* of Uncle Sam's new-fashioned revenue craft, one on each side of me."

"How delightful do I find such conversation, Rose! It's as much like your poor dear uncle's as one pea is like another. 'Yes,' he used to say, too, 'let me only have one on each side of me, and a wrapper round the topgallant sail to hold the breeze, and I'd not call the king my uncle,' Now I think of it, *he* used to talk about the king as his uncle, too."

"It was all talk, aunty; he had no uncle, and, what is more, he had no king."

"That's quite true, Miss Rose," rejoined Spike, attempting a bow, which ended in a sort of jerk; "it *is* not very becoming in us republicans to be talking of kings, but a habit is a habit. Our forefathers had kings, and we drop into their ways without thinking of what we are doing. Fore-topgallant yard, there!"

"Sir."

"Keep a bright lookout ahead. Let me know the instant you make anything in the neighborhood of Montauk."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"As I was saying, Madam Budd, we seamen drop into our forefathers' ways. Now when I was a youngster, I remember one day that we fell in with a ketch—you know, Miss Rose, what a ketch is, I suppose?"

"I have not the least notion of it, sir.'

"Rosy, you amaze me!" exclaimed the aunt—"and you a shipmaster's niece, and a shipmaster's daughter! A catch is a trick that sailors have when they quiz landsmen."

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes; we have them sort of catches, too; but I now mean the vessel was a peculiar rig, which we call a ketch, you know."

"Is it the full-jigger or the half-jigger sort that you mean?"

Spike could hardly stand this, and he had to hail the top-gallant yard again, in order to keep the command of his muscles, for he saw by the pretty frown that was gathering on the brow of Rose, that she was regarding the matter a little seriously. Luckily, the answer of the man on the yard diverted the mind of the widow from the subject, and prevented the necessity of any reply.

"There's a light of course, sir, on Montauk; is there not, Captain Spike?" demanded the seaman who was aloft.

"To be sure there is—every headland hereabouts has its light, and some have two."

"Ay, ay, sir; it's that which puzzles me; I think I see one light-house, and I'm not certain but I see two."

"If there is anything like a second, it must be a sail. Montauk has but one light."

Mulford sprung into the fore-rigging, and in a minute was on the yard. He soon came down, and reported the light-house in sight, with the afternoon's sun shining on it, but no sail near.

"My poor dear Mr. Budd used to tell a story of his being cast away on a light-house, in the East Indies," put in the relict as soon as the mate had ended his report, "which always affected me. It seems there were three ships of them together in an awful tempest directly off the land—"

"That was comfortable, anyhow," cried Spike; "if it must blow hard, let it come off the land, say I."

"Yes, sir, it was directly off the land, as my poor husband always said, which made it so much the worse, you must know, Rosy; though Captain Spike's gallant spirit would rather encounter danger than not. It blew what they call a hyson in the Chinese seas—"

"A what, aunty? Hyson is the name of a tea, you know."

"A hyson I'm pretty sure it was; and I suppose the wind is named after the tea, or the tea after the wind."

"The ladies do get in a gale sometimes over their tea," said Spike, gallantly; "but I rather think Madam Budd must mean a typhoon."

"That's it—a typhoon, or a hyson—there is not much difference between them, you see. Well, it blew a typhoon, and they are always mortal to somebody! This my poor Mr. Budd well knew, and he had set his chronometer for that typhoon—"

"Excuse me, aunty, it was the barometer that he was watching—the chronometer was his watch."

"So it was—his watch on deck *was* his chronometer. I declare I *am* forgetting a part of my education. Do you know the use of a chronometer, now, Rosy? You have seen your uncle's often, but do you know how he used it?"

"Not in the least, aunty. My uncle often tried to explain it, but I never could understand him."

"It must have been, then, because Captain Budd did not try to make himself comprehended," said Mulford, "for I feel certain nothing would be easier than to make *you* understand the use of the chronometer."

"I should like to learn it from *you*, Mr. Mulford," answered the charming girl, with an emphasis so slight on the "you" that no one observed it but the mate, but which was clear enough to him, and caused every nerve to thrill.

"I can attempt it," answered the young man, "if it be agreeable to Mrs. Budd, who would probably like to hear it herself."

"Certainly, Mr. Mulford; though I fancy you can say little on such a subject that I have not often heard already, from my poor dear Mr. Budd."

This was not very encouraging, truly; but Rose, continuing to look interested, the mate proceeded:

"The use of the chronometer is to ascertain the longitude," said Harry, "and the manner of doing it is simply this. A chronometer is nothing more nor less than a watch, made with more care than usual, so as to keep the most accurate time. They are of all sizes, from that of a clock down to this which I wear in my fob, and which is a watch in size and appearance. Now the nautical almanacs are all calculated to some particular meridian——"

"Yes," interrupted the relict, "Mr. Budd had a great deal to say about meridians."

"That of London, or Greenwich, being the meridian used by those who use the English almanacs, and those of Paris or St. Petersburg, by the French and Russians. Each of these places has an observatory, and chronometers are kept carefully regulated, the year around. Every chronometer is set by the regulator of the particular observatory or place to which the almanac used is calculated."

"How wonderfully like my poor dear Mr. Budd all this is, Rosy? Meridians, and calculated, and almanacs! I could almost think I heard your uncle entertaining me with one of his nautical discussions, I declare!"

"Now the sun rises earlier in places east, than in places west of us."

"It rises earlier in the summer, but later in the winter, everywhere, Mr. Mulford."

"Yes, my dear madam; but the sun rises earlier every day in London than it does in New York."

"That is impossible," said the widow, dogmatically; "why should not the sun rise at the same time in England and America?"

"Because England is east of America, aunty. The sun does not move, you know, but only appears to us to move, because the earth turns round from east to west, which causes those who are furthest east to see it first. That is what Mr. Mulford means."

"Rose has explained it perfectly well," continued the mate. "Now the earth is divided into 360 degrees, and the day is divided into 24 hours. If 360 be divided by 24, the quotient will be 15. It follows

that for each fifteen degrees of longitude, there is a difference of just one hour in the rising of the sun all over the earth, where it rises at all. New York is five times 15 degrees west of Greenwich, and the sun consequently rises five hours later in New York than in London."

"There *must* be a mistake in this, Rosy," said the relict, in a tone of desperate resignation, in which the desire to break out in dissent was struggling oddly enough with an assumed dignity of deportment. "I've always heard that the people of London are some of the latest in the world. Then, I've been in London, and know that the sun rises in New York, in December, a good deal earlier than it does in London, by the clock—yes, by the clock."

"True enough by the clock, Mrs. Budd, for London is more than 10 degrees north of New York, and the further north you go, the later the sun rises in winter and the earlier in summer.

The relict merely shrugged her shoulders, as much as to say that she knew no such thing; but Rose, who had been well taught, raised her serene eyes to her aunt's face, and mildly said:

"All true, aunty, and that is owing to the fact that the earth is smaller at each end than in the middle."

"Fiddle-faddle with your middles and ends, Rose—I've been in London, dear, and know that the sun rises later there than in New York, in the month of December, and that I know by the clock, I tell you."

"The reason of which is," resumed Mulford, "because the clocks of each place keep the time of that place. Now it is different with the chronometers; they are set in the observatory of Greenwich, and keep the time of Greenwich. This watch chronometer was set there, only six months since; and this time, as you see, is near nine o'clock, when in truth it is only about four o'clock here, where we are."

"I wonder you keep such a watch, Mr. Mulford!"

"I keep it," returned the mate, smiling, "because I know it to keep good time. It has the Greenwich time; and as your watch has the New York time, by comparing them together, it is quite easy to find the longitude of New York."

"Do you, then, keep watches to compare with your chronometers?" asked Rose, with interest.

"Certainly not; as that would require a watch for every separate part of the ocean, and then we should only get known longitudes. It would be impracticable, and load a ship with nothing but watches. What we do is this: We set our chronometers at Greenwich, and thus keep the Greenwich true time wherever we go. The greatest attention is paid to the chronometers, to see that they receive no injuries; and usually there are two, and often more of them, to compare one with another, in order to see that they go well. When in the middle of the ocean, for instance, we find the true time of the day at that spot, by ascertaining the height of the sun. This we do by means of our quadrants, or sextants; for as the sun is always in the zenith at twelve o'clock, nothing is easier than to do this, when the sun can be seen, and an arc of the heavens measured. At the instant the height of the sun is ascertained by one observer, he calls to another, who notes the time on the chronometer. The difference in these two times, or that of the chronometer and that of the sun, gives the distance in degrees and minutes, between the longitude of Greenwich and that of that place on the ocean where the observer is; and that gives him his longitude. If the difference is three hours and twenty minutes in time, the distance from Greenwich is fifty degrees in longitude, because the sun rises three hours and twenty minutes sooner in London than in the fiftieth degree of west longitude."

"A watch is a watch, Rosy," put in the aunt, doggedly, "and time is time. When it's four o'clock at our house, it is four o'clock at your aunt Sprague's, and it's so all over the world. The world may turn around—I'll not deny it, for your uncle often said as much as *that*, but it cannot turn in the way Mr. Mulford says, or we should fall off it, at night, when it was bottom upward. No, sir, no; you've

started wrong. My poor dear late Mr. Budd always admitted that the world turned around, as the books say; but when I suggested to him the difficulty of keeping things in their places, with the earth upside down, he acknowledged candidly—for he was all candor, I must say that for him—and owned that he had made a discovery by means of the barometer, which showed that the world did not turn around in the way you describe, or by rolling over, but by whirling about as one turns in a dance. You must remember your uncle's telling me this, Rose?"

Rose did remember her uncle's telling her aunt this, as well as a great many other similar prodigies. Captain Budd had married his silly wife on account of her pretty face, and when the novelty of that was over, he often amused himself by inventing all sorts of absurdities, to amuse both her and himself. Among other things Rose well remembered his quieting her aunt's scruples about falling off the earth, by laying down the theory that the world did not "roll over," but "whirl round." But Rose did not answer the question.

"Objects are kept in their places on the earth by means of attraction," Mulford ventured to say, with a great deal of humility of manner. "I believe it is thought there is no up or down, except as we go from or toward the earth; and that would make the position of the last a matter of indifference, as respects objects keeping on it."

"Attractions are great advantages, I will own, sir, especially to our sex. I think it will be acknowledged there has been no want of them in our family, any more than there has been of sense and information. Sense and information we pride ourselves on; attractions being gifts from God, we try to think less of them. But all attractions in the world could not keep Rosy, here, from falling off the earth, did it ever come bottom upward. And, mercy on me, where would she fall to?"

Mulford saw the argument was useless, and he confined his remarks, during the rest of the conversation, to showing Rose the manner in which the longitude of a place might be ascertained, with the aid of the chronometer, and by means of observations to get the true time of day at the particular place itself. Rose was so quick-witted, and already so well instructed, as easily to comprehend the principles, the details being matters of no great moment to one of her sex and habits. But Mrs. Budd remained antagonistic to the last. She obstinately maintained that twelve o'clock was twelve o'clock; or, if there *was* any difference, "London hours were notoriously later than those of New York."

Against such assertions arguments were obviously useless, and Mulford, perceiving that Rose began to fidget, had sufficient tact to change the conversation altogether.

And still the *Molly Swash* kept in swift motion. Montauk was by this time abeam, and the little brigantine began to rise and fall on the long swells of the Atlantic, which now opened before her in one vast sheet of green and rolling waters. On her right lay the termination of Long Island; a low, rocky cape, with its light, a few fields in tillage for the use of those who tended it. It was the "land's end" of New York, while the island that was heaving up out of the sea, at a distance of about twenty miles to the eastward, was the property of Rhode Island, being called Block Island. Between the two the *Swash* shaped her course for the ocean.

Spike had betrayed uneasiness as his brig came up with Montauk; but the coast seemed clear, with not even a distant sail in sight, and he came aft, rubbing his hands with delight, speaking cheerfully.

"All right, Mr. Mulford," he cried; "everything ship-shape and brister-fashion—not even a smack fishing hereaway, which is a little remarkable. Ha! what are you staring at, over the quarter, there?"

"Look here, sir, directly in the wake of the setting sun, which we are now opening from the land—is not that a sail?"

"Sail! Impossible, sir. What should a sail be doing in there, so near Montauk—no man ever saw a sail there in his life. It's a spot in the sun, Madam Budd, that

my mate has got a glimpse at, and, sailor-like, he mistakes it for a sail! Ha—ha—ha—yes, Harry, it's a spot on the sun."

"It is a spot *on* the sun, as you say, but it's a spot made by a vessel; and there is a boat pulling toward her, might and main—going from the light, as if carrying news."

It was no longer possible for Spike's hopes to deceive him. There was a vessel, sure enough; though, when first seen, it was so directly in a line with the fiery orb of the setting sun, as to escape common observation. As the brig went foaming on toward the ocean, however, the black speck was soon brought out of the range of the orb of day, and Spike's glass was instantly leveled at it.

"Just as one might expect, Mr. Mulford" cried the captain, lowering his glass, and looking aloft to see what could be done to help his craft along, "a bloody revenue cutter, as I'm a wicked sinner! There she lies, sir, within musket shot of the shore, hid behind the point, as it might be in waiting for us, with her head toward the southward, her helm hard down, topsail aback, and foresail brailed; as wicked-looking a thing as Free Trade and Sailor's Rights ever ran from. My life on it, sir, she's been put in that precise spot, in waiting for the *Molly* to arrive. You see, as we stand on, it places her as handsomely to windward of us, as the heart of man could desire."

"It *is* a revenue cutter, sir; now she's out of the sun's wake, that is plain enough. And that is her boat which has been sent to the light to keep a lookout for us. Well, sir, she's to windward; but we have everything set for our course, and as we are fairly abeam, she must be a great traveler to overhaul us."

"I thought these bloody cutters were all down in the Gulf," growled the captain, casting his eye aloft again to see that everything drew. "I'm sure the newspapers have mentioned as many as twenty that are down there, and here is one, lying behind Montauk, like a snake in the grass!"

"At any rate, by the time he gets his boat up we shall get the start of him—ay, there he fills and falls off, to go and meet her. He'll soon be after us, Captain Spike, at racing speed."

Everything occurred as those two mariners had foreseen. The revenue cutter, one of the usual fore-topsail schooners that are employed in that service, up and down the coast, had no sooner hoisted up her boat, than she made sail, a little off the wind, on a line to close with the *Swash*. As for the brig, she had hauled up to an easy bowline, as she came round Montauk, and was now standing off south-southeast, still having the wind at southwest. The weatherly position of the cutter enabled her to steer rather more than one point freer. At the commencement of this chase the vessels were about a mile and a half apart, a distance too great to enable the cutter to render the light guns she carried available, and it was obvious from the first that everything depended on speed. And speed it was truly; both vessels fairly flying; the *Molly Swash* having at last met with something very like her match. Half an hour satisfied both Spike and Mulford that, by giving the cutter the advantage of one point in a freer wind, she would certainly get alongside of them, and the alternative was therefore to keep off.

"A starn chase is a long chase, all the world over," cried Spike—"edge away, sir; edge away, sir, and bring the cutter well on our quarter."

This order was obeyed but, to the surprise of those in the *Swash*, the cutter did not exactly follow, though she kept off a little more. Her object seemed to be to maintain her weatherly position, and in this manner the two vessels ran on for an hour longer, until the *Swash* had made most of the distance between Montauk and Block Island. Objects were even becoming dimly visible on the last, and a light on the point was just becoming visible, a lone star above a waste of desert, the sun having been down now fully a quarter of an hour, and twilight beginning to draw the curtain of night over the waters.

"A craft under Block," shouted the

lookout, that was still kept aloft as a necessary precaution.

"What sort of a craft?" demanded Spike, fiercely; for the very mention of a sail, at that moment, aroused all his ire. "Aren't you making a frigate out of an apple orchard?"

"It's the steamer, sir. I can now see her smoke. She's just clearing the land, on the south side of the island, and seems to be coming round to meet us."

A long, low, eloquent whistle from the captain succeeded this announcement. The man aloft was right. It *was* the steamer, sure enough; and she had been lying hid behind Block Island, exactly as her consort had been placed behind Montauk, in waiting for their chase to arrive. The result was to put the *Molly Swash* in exceeding jeopardy, and the reason why the cutter kept so well to windward was fully explained. To pass out to sea between these two craft was hopeless. There remained but a single alternative from capture by one or by the other, and that Spike adopted instantly. He kept his brig dead away, setting studding-sails on both sides. This change of course brought the cutter nearly aft, or somewhat on the other quarter, and laid the brig's head in a direction to carry her close to the northern coast of the island. But the principal advantage was gained over the steamer, which could not keep off, without first standing a mile or two, or even more, to the westward, in order to clear the land. This was so much clear gain to the *Swash*, which was running off at racing speed, on a northeast course, while her most dangerous enemy was still heading to the westward. As for the cutter, she kept away; but it was soon apparent that the brig had the heels of her, dead before the wind.

Darkness now began to close around the three vessels; the brig and the schooner soon becoming visible to each other principally by means of their night-glasses, though the steamer's position could be easily distinguished by means of her flaming chimney. This latter vessel stood to the westward for a quarter of an hour, when her commander appeared to become suddenly conscious of the ground he was losing, and he wore short round, and went off before the wind under steam and canvas, intending to meet the chase off the northern side of the island. The very person who had hailed the *Swash* as she was leaving the wharf, who had passed her in Hell Gate, with Jack Tier in his boat, and who had joined her off Throgmorton's, was now on her deck, urging her commander by every consideration not to let the brig escape. It was at his suggestion that the course was changed. Nervous and eager to seize the brig, he prevailed on the commander of the steamer to alter his course. Had he done no more than this, all might have been well; but so exaggerated were his notions of the *Swash's* sailing, that, instead of suffering the steamer to keep close along the eastern side of the island, he persuaded her commander of the necessity of standing off a long distance to the northward and eastward, with a view to get ahead of the chase. This was not bad advice, were there any certainty that Spike would stand on, of which, however, he had no intention.

The night set in dark and cloudy; and the instant that Spike saw, by means of the flaming chimney, that the steamer had wore and was going to the eastward of Block, his plan was laid. Calling to Mulford, he communicated it to him, and was glad to find that his intelligent mate was of his own way of thinking. The necessary orders were given, accordingly, and everything was got ready for its execution.

In the meantime, the two revenue craft were much in earnest. The schooner was one of the fastest in the service, and had been placed under Montauk, as described, in the confident expectation of her being able to compete with even the *Molly Swash* successfully, more especially if brought upon a bowline. Her commander watched the receding form of the brig with the closest attention, until it was entirely swallowed up in the darkness, under the land, toward which he then sheered himself in order to prevent the *Swash* from hauling up, and turning

to windward, close in under the shadow of the island. Against this maneuver, however, the cutter had now taken an effectual precaution, and her people were satisfied that escape in that way was impossible.

On the other hand, the steamer was doing very well. Driven by the breeze, and propelled by her wheels, away she went, edging further and further from the island, as the person from the custom-house succeeded, as it might be, inch by inch, in persuading the captain of the necessity of his so doing. At length a sail was dimly seen ahead, and then no doubt was entertained that the brig had got to the northward and eastward of them. Half an hour brought the steamer alongside of this sail, which turned out to be a brig that had come over the shoals, and was beating into the ocean, on her way to one of the Southern ports. Her captain said there had nothing passed to the eastward.

Round went the steamer, and in went all her canvas. Ten minutes later, the lookout saw a sail to the westward, standing before the wind. Odd as it might seem, the steamer's people now fancied they were sure of the *Swash*. There she was, coming directly for them, with squared yards! The distance was short, or a vessel could not have been seen by that light, and the two crafts were soon near each other. A gun was actually cleared on board the steamer, ere it was ascertained that the stranger was the schooner! It was now midnight, and nothing was in sight but the coasting brig. Reluctantly, the revenue people gave the matter up; the *Molly Swash* having again eluded them, though by means unknown.

CHAPTER IV.

"Leander dived for love. Leucadia's cliff
The Lesbian Sappho leap'd from in a miff,
To punish Phaon; Icarus went dead,
Because the wax did not continue stiff;
And, had he minded what his father said,
He had not given a name unto his watery bed."
—SANDS.

WE must now advance the time several days, and change the scene to a distant part of the ocean—within the tropics, indeed. The females had suffered slight attacks of sea-sickness, and recovered from them, and the brig was safe from all her pursuers. The manner of Spike's escape was simple enough, and without any necromancy. While the steamer, on the one hand, was standing away to the northward and eastward, in order to head him off, and the schooner was edging in with the island, in order to prevent his beating up to windward of it, within its shadows, the brig had run close round the narrow margin of the land, and hauled up to leeward of the island, passing between it and the steamer. All this time, her movements were concealed from the schooner by the island itself, and from the steamer by its shadow and dark background, aided by the distance. By making short tacks, this expedient answered perfectly well; and, at the very moment when the two revenue vessels met, at midnight, about three leagues to leeward of Block Island, the brigantine *Molly Swash* was just clearing her most weatherly point, on the larboard tack, and coming out exactly at the spot where the steamer was when first seen that afternoon. Spike stood to the westward, until he was certain of having the island fairly between him and his pursuers, when he went about, and filled away on his course, running out to sea again on an easy bowline.

At sunrise the next day he was fifty miles to the southward and eastward of Montauk; the schooner was going into New London, her officers and people quite chop-fallen; and the steamer was paddling up the Sound, her captain being fully persuaded that the runaways had returned in the direction from which they had come, and might yet be picked up in that quarter.

The weather was light, just a week after the events related in the close of the last chapter. By this time the brig had got within the influence of the trades; and, it being the intention of Spike to pass to the southward of Cuba, he had so far profited by the westerly winds as to get well to the eastward of the Mona Passage, the strait through which he intended to shape his course on making the islands.

Early on that morning, Mrs. Budd had taken her seat on the trunk of the cabin, with a complacent air, and arranged her netting, some slight passages of gallantry, on the part of the captain, having induced her to propose netting him a purse.

Biddy was going to and fro, in quest of silks and needles, her mistress having become slightly capricious in her tastes of late, and giving her, on all such occasions, at least a double allowance of occupation. As for Rose, she sat reading beneath the shade of the coach-house deck, while the handsome young mate was within three feet of her, working up his logarithms, but within the sanctuary of his own stateroom; the open door and window of which, however, gave him every facility he could desire to relieve his mathematics by gazing at the sweet countenance of his charming neighbor. Jack Tier and Josh were both passing to and fro, as is the wont of stewards, between the caboose and the cabin, the breakfast table being just then in the course of preparation. In all other respects, always excepting the man at the wheel, who stood within a fathom of Rose, Spike had the quarter-deck to himself, and did not fail to pace its weather-side with an air that denoted the master and owner. After exhibiting his sturdy, but short, person in this manner, to the admiring eyes of all beholders, for some time, the captain suddenly took a seat at the side of the relict, and dropped into the following discourse.

"The weather is moderate, Madam Budd; quite moderate," observed Spike, a sentimental turn coming over him at the moment. "What I call moderate and agreeable."

"So much the better for us; the ladies are fond of moderation, sir."

"Not in admiration, Madam Budd—ha! ha! ha! no, not in admiration. *Immoderation* is what they like when it comes to *that*. I'm a single man, but I know that the ladies like admiration—mind where you're sheering-to," the captain said, interrupting himself a little fiercely, considering the nature of the subject, in consequence of Jack Tier's having trodden on his toe in passing; "or I'll teach you the navigation of the quarter-deck, Mr. Burgoo!"

"Moderation—moderation, my good captain," said the simpering relict. "As to admiration, I confess that it is agreeable to us ladies; more especially when it comes from gentlemen of sense, and intelligence, and experience."

Rose fidgeted, having heard every word that was said, and her face flushed; for she doubted not that Harry's ears were as good as her own. As for the man at the wheel, he turned the tobacco over in his mouth, hitched up his trousers, and appeared interested, though somewhat mystified; the conversation was what he would have termed "talking dictionary," and he had some curiosity to learn how the captain would work his way out of it. It is probable that Spike himself had some similar gleamings of the difficulties of his position, for he looked a little troubled, though still resolute. It was the first time he had ever lain yard-arm with a widow, and he had long entertained a fancy that such a situation was trying to the best of men.

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes," he said "exper'ence and sense carry weight with 'em, wherever they go. I'm glad to find that you entertain these just notions of us gentlemen, and make a difference between boys and them that's seen and known exper'ence. For my part, I count youngsters under forty as so much lumber about decks, as to any comfort and calculations in keepin' a family, as a family *ought* to be kept."

Mrs. Budd looked interested, but she remained silent on hearing this remark, as became her sex.

"Every man ought to settle in life, some time or other, Madam Budd, accordin' to my notion, though no man ought to be in a boyish haste about it," continued the captain. "Now, in my own case, I've been so busy all my youth—not that I'm very old now, but I'm no boy—but all my younger days have been passed in trying to make things meet in a way to put any lady who might take a fancy to me—"

"Oh! captain—that is *too* strong!

The ladies do not take fancies for gentlemen, but the gentlemen take fancies for ladies!"

"Well, well, you know what I mean, Madam Budd; and so long as the parties understand each other, a word dropped, or a word put into a charter-party, makes it neither stronger nor weaker. There's a time, howsomever, in every man's life, when he begins to think of settling down, and of considerin' himself as a sort of mooring-chain for children and the likes of them to make fast to. Such is my natur', I will own; and ever since I've got to be intimate in your family, Madam Budd, that sentiment has grown stronger and stronger in me, till it has got to be uppermost in all my ideas. Bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, as a body might say."

Mrs. Budd now looked more than interested, for she looked a little confused, and Rose began to tremble for her aunt. It was evident that the parties most conspicuous in this scene were not at all conscious that they were overheard, the intensity of their attention being too much concentrated on what was passing to allow of any observation without their own narrow circle. What may be thought still more extraordinary, but what in truth was the most natural of all, each of the parties was so intently bent on his or her own train of thought, that neither in the least suspected any mistake.

"Grown with your growth, and strengthened with your strength," rejoined the relict, smiling kindly enough on the captain to have encouraged a much more modest man than he happened to be.

"Yes, Madam Budd—very just that remark; grown with my strength, and strengthened with my growth, as one might say; though I've not done much at growing for a good many years. Your late husband, Captain Budd, often remarked how very early I got my growth; and rated me as an 'able-bodied' hand when most lads think it an honor to be placed among the 'or'naries.'"

The relict looked grave; and she wondered at any man's being so singular as to allude to a first husband at the very moment he was thinking of offering himself for a second. As for herself, she had not uttered as many words in the last four years as she had uttered in that very conversation without making some allusion to her "poor dear Mr. Budd." The reader is not to do injustice to the captain's widow, however, by supposing for a moment that she was actually so weak as to feel any tenderness for a man like Spike, which would be doing a great wrong to both her taste and her judgment, as Rose well knew, even while most annoyed by the conversation she could not but overhear. All that influenced the good relict was that besetting weakness of her sex, which renders admiration so universally acceptable; and predisposes a female, as it might be, to listen to a suit with indulgence and some little show of kindness even when resolute to reject him. As for Rose, to own the truth, her aunt did not give her a thought, as yet, notwithstanding Spike was getting to be so sentimental.

"Yes, your late excellent and honorable consort always said that I got my growth sooner than any youngster he ever fell in with," resumed the captain, after a short pause, exciting fresh wonder in his companion, that he *would* persist in lugging in the "dear departed" so very unseasonably. "I am a great admirer of all the Budd family, my good lady, and only wish my connection with it had never tarminated, if tarminated it can be called."

"It need not be terminated, Captain Spike, so long as friendship exists in the human heart."

"Ay, so it is always with you ladies; when a man is bent on suthin' closer and more interestin' like, you're for putting it off on friendship. Now friendship is good enough in its way, Madam Budd, but friendship isn't *love*."

"*Love!*" echoed the widow, fairly starting, though she looked down at her netting, and looked as confused as she knew how. "That is a very decided word, Captain Spike, and should never be mentioned to a woman's ear lightly."

So the captain now appeared to think,

too, for no sooner had he delivered himself of the important monosyllable, than he left the widow's side, and began to pace the deck, as it might be to moderate his own ardor. As for Rose, she blushed, if her more practiced aunt did not; while Harry Mulford laughed heartily, taking good care, however, not to be heard. The man at the wheel turned the tobacco again, gave his trousers another hitch, and wondered anew whither the skipper was bound. But the drollest manifestation of surprise came from Josh, the steward, who was passing along the lee side of the quarter-deck with a tea-pot in his hand, when the energetic manner of the captain sent the words "friendship isn't *love*" to his ears. This induced him to stop for a single instant, and to cast a wondering glance behind him; after which he moved on toward the galley, mumbling as he went—"Lub! what *he* want of lub, or what lub want of *him?* Well, I do t'ink Captain Spike bowse his jib out pretty 'arly dis mornin'."

Captain Spike soon got over the effects of his effort, and the confusion of the relict did not last any material length of time. As the former had gone so far, however, he thought the present an occasion as good as another to bring matters to a crisis.

"Our sentiments sometimes get to be so strong, Madam Budd, resumed the lover, as he took his seat again on the trunk, "that they run away with us. Men is liable to be run away with as well as ladies. I once had a ship run away with me, and a pretty time we had of it. Did you ever hear of a ship's running away with her people, Madam Budd, just as your horse ran away with your buggy?"

"I suppose I must have heard of such things, sir, my education having been so maritime, though just at this moment I cannot recall an instance. When my horse ran away the buggy was cap-asided. Did your vessel cap-aside on the occasion you mention?"

"No, Madam Budd, no. The ship was off the wind at the time I mean, and vessels do not capsize when off the wind. I'll tell you how it happened. We was a-scuddin' under a goose-wing foresail—"

"Yes, yes," interrupted the relict, eagerly. "I've often heard of that sail, which is small and used only in tempests."

"Heavy weather, Madam Budd—only in heavy weather."

"It is amazing to me, captain, how you seamen manage to weigh the weather. I have often heard of light weather and heavy weather, but never fairly understood the manner of weighing it."

"Why, we *do* make out to ascertain the difference," replied the captain, a little puzzled for an answer; "and I suppose it must be by means of the barometer, which goes up and down like a pair of scales. But the time I mean, we was a-scuddin' under a goose-wing foresail—"

"A sail made of goose's wiugs, and a beautiful object it must be; like some of the caps and cloaks that come from the islands, which are all of feathers, and charming objects are they. I beg pardon—you had your goose's wings spread—"

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes; we were steering for a Mediterranean port, intending to clear a mole-head, when a sea took us under the larboard quarter, gave us such a sheer to port as sent our cathead ag'in a spile, and raked away the chain-plates of the topmast back-stays, bringing down all the forrard hamper about our ears."

This description produced such a confusion in the mind of the widow that she was glad when it came to an end. As for the captain, fearful that the "goose's wings" might be touched upon again, he thought it wisest to attempt another flight on those of Cupid.

"As I was sayin', Madam Budd, friendship isn't *love;* no, not a bit of it! Friendship is a common sort of feelin'; but love, as you must know by exper'ence, Madam Budd, is an uncommon sort of feelin'."

"Fie, Captain Spike, gentlemen should never allude to ladies knowing anything about love. Ladies *respect*, and *admire*, and *esteem*, and have a *regard* for gen-

tlemen; but it is almost too strong to talk about their love."

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes; I dare say it is so, and *ought* to be so; and I ask pardon for having said as much as I did. But my love for your niece is of so animated and lastin' a natur', that I scarce know what I did say."

"Captain Spike, you amaze me! I declare I can hardly breathe for astonishment! My niece! Surely you do not mean Rosy?"

"Who else should I mean? My love for Miss Rose is so very decided and animated, I tell you, Madam Budd, that I will not answer for the consequences should you not consent to her marryin' me."

"I can scarce believe my ears! You, Stephen Spike, and an old friend of her uncle's, wishing to marry his niece!"

"Just so, Madam Budd; that's it, to a shavin'. The regard I have for the whole family is so great that nothin' less than the hand of Miss Rose in marriage can, what I call, mitigate my feelin's."

Now the relict had not one spark of tenderness herself in behalf of Spike; while she did love Rose better than any human being, her own self excepted. But she had viewed all the sentiment of that morning, and all the fine speeches of the captain, very differently from what the present state of things told her she ought to have viewed them; and she felt the mortification natural to her situation. The captain was so much bent on the attainment of his own object that he saw nothing else, and was even unconscious that his extraordinary and somewhat loud discourse had been overheard. Least of all did he suspect that his admiration had been mistaken; and that in what he called "courtin'" the niece, he had been all the while "courtin'" the aunt. But little apt as she was to discover anything, Mrs. Budd had enough of her sex's discernment in a matter of this sort, to perceive that she had fallen into an awkward mistake, and enough of her sex's pride to resent it. Taking her work in her hand she left her seat, and descended to the cabin, with quite as much dignity in her manner as it was in the power of one of her height and "build" to express. What is the most extraordinary, neither she nor Spike ever ascertained that their whole dialogue had been overheard. Spike continued to pace the quarter-deck for several minutes, scarce knowing what to think of the relict's manner, when his attention was suddenly drawn to other matters by the familiar cry of "Sail-ho!"

This was positively the first vessel with which the *Molly Swash* had fallen in since she lost sight of two or three craft that had passed her in the distance, as she left the American coast. As usual, this cry brought all hands on deck, and Mulford out of his stateroom.

It has been stated already that the brig was just beginning to feel the trades, and it might have been added, to see the mountains of San Domingo. The winds had been variable for the last day or two, and they still continued light and disposed to be unsteady, ranging from northeast to southeast, with a preponderance in favor of the first point. At the cry of "Sail-ho!" everybody looked in the indicated direction, which was west, a little northerly, but for a long time without success. The cry had come from aloft, and Mulford went up as high as the foretop, before he got any glimpse of the stranger at all. He had slung a glass, and Spike was unusually anxious to know the result of his examination.

"Well, Mr. Mulford, what do you make of her?" he called out as soon as the mate announced that he saw the strange vessel.

"Wait a moment, sir, till I get a look—she's a long way off, and hardly visible."

"Well, sir, well?"

"I can only see the heads of her topgallant-sails. She seems a ship steering to the southward, with as many kites flying as an Indiaman in the trades. She looks as if she were carrying royal stun'-sails, sir."

"The devil she does! Such a chap must not only be in a hurry, but he must be strong-handed to give himself all this trouble in such light and vari-

able winds. Are his yards square? Is he man-of-warish?"

"There's no telling, sir, at this distance; though I rather think it's stun'-sails that I see. Go down and get your breakfast, and in half an hour I'll give a better account of him."

This was done, Mrs. Budd appearing at the table with great dignity in her manner. Although she had so naturally supposed that Spike's attentions had been intended for herself, she was rather mortified than hurt on discovering her mistake. Her appetite, consequently, was not impaired, though her stomach might have been said to be very full. The meal passed off without any scene, notwithstanding, and Spike soon reappeared on deck, still masticating the last mouthful, like a man in a hurry, and a good deal *a la Américaine*. Mulford saw his arrival, and immediately leveled his glass again.

"Well, what news now, sir?" called out the captain. "You must have a better chance at him by this time, for I can see the chap from off the coach-house here."

"Ay, ay, sir; he's a bit nearer, certainly. I should say that craft is a ship under stun'-sails, looking to the eastward of south, and that there are caps with gold bands on her quarter-deck."

"How low down can you see her?" demanded Spike, in a voice of thunder.

So emphatic and remarkable was the captain's manner in putting this question, that the mate cast a look of surprise beneath him ere he answered it. A look with the glass succeeded, when the reply was given:

"Ay, ay, sir; there can be no mistake—it's a cruiser, you may depend on it. I can see the heads of her topsails now, and they are so square and symmetrical that gold bands are below beyond all doubt."

"Perhaps he's a Frenchman; Johnny Crapaud keeps cruisers in these seas as well as the rest on 'em."

"Johnny Crapaud's craft don't spread such arms, sir. The ship is either English or American; and he's heading for the Mona Passage as well as ourselves."

"Come down, sir, come down; there's work to be done as soon as you have breakfasted."

Mulford did come down, and he was soon seated at the table, with both Josh and Jack Tier for attendants. The aunt and the niece were in their own cabin, a few yards distant, with the door open.

"What a fuss 'e cap'in make 'bout dat sail!" grumbled Josh, who had been in the brig so long that he sometimes took liberties with even Spike himself. "What good he t'ink 'twill do to measure him inch by inch? Bye'm-by he got alongside, and den 'e ladies even can tell all about him."

"He nat'rally wishes to know who gets alongside," put in Tier, somewhat apologetically.

"What matter dat? All sort of folk get alongside of *Molly Swash;* and what good it do em? Yoh! yoh! yoh! I *do* remem'er sich times vid 'e ole hussy!"

"What ole hussy do you mean?" demanded Jack Tier, a little fiercely, and in a way to draw Mulford's eyes from the profile of Rose's face to the visages of his two attendants.

"Come, come, gentlemen, if you please; recollect where you are," interrupted the mate, authoritatively. "You are not now squabbling in your galley, but are in the cabin. What is it to you, Tier, if Josh does call the brig an old hussy? She is old, as we all know, and years are respectable; and as for her being a 'hussy,' that is a term of endearment sometimes. I've heard the captain himself call the *Molly* a 'hussy' fifty times, and he loves her as he does the apple of his eye."

This interference put an end to the gathering storm, as a matter of course, and the two disputants shortly after passed on deck. No sooner was the coast clear than Rose stood in the door of her own cabin.

"Do you think the strange vessel is an American?" she asked, eagerly.

"It is impossible to say—English or American, I make no doubt. But why do you inquire?"

"Both my aunt and myself desire to quit the brig, and if the stranger should

prove to be an American vessel of war, might not the occasion be favorable?"

"And what reason can you give for desiring to do so?"

"What signifies a reason?" answered Rose, with spirit. "Spike is not our master, and we can come and go as we may see fit."

"But a reason must be given to satisfy the commander of the vessel of war. Craft of that character are very particular about the passengers they receive; nor would it be altogether wise in two unprotected females to go on board a cruiser, unless in a case of the most obvious necessity."

"Will not what has passed this morning be thought a sufficient reason?" added Rose, drawing nearer to the mate, and dropping her voice so as not to be heard by her aunt.

Mulford smiled as he gazed at the earnest but attractive countenance of his charming companion.

"And who could tell it, or *how* could it be told? Would the commander of a vessel of war incur the risk of receiving such a person as yourself on board his vessel, for the reason that the master of the craft she was in, when he fell in with her, desired to marry her?"

Rose appeared vexed, but she was at once made sensible that it was not quite as easy to change her vessel at sea as to step into a strange door in a town. She drew back into her own cabin, silent and thoughtful; her aunt pursuing her netting the whole time with an air of dignified industry.

"Well, Mr. Mulford, well," called out Spike, at the head of the cabin stairs, "what news from the coffee?"

"All ready, sir," answered the mate, exchanging significant glances with Rose. "I shall be up in a moment."

That moment soon came, and Mulford was ready for duty. While below, Spike had caused certain purchases to be got aloft, and the main hatch was open and the men collected around it, in readiness to proceed with the work. Harry asked no questions, for the preparations told him what was about to be done, but passing below he took charge of the duty there, while the captain superintended the part that was conducted on deck. In the course of the next hour eight twelve-pound carronades were sent up out of the hold, and mounted in as many of the ports which lined the bulwarks of the brigantine. The men seemed to be accustomed to the sort of work in which they were now engaged, and soon had their light batteries in order, and ready for service. In the meantime the two vessels kept on their respective courses, and by the time the guns were mounted there was a sensible difference in their relative positions. The stranger had drawn so near the brigantine as to be very obvious from the latter's deck, while the brigantine had drawn so much nearer to the islands of San Domingo and Porto Rico, as to render the opening between them, the well-known Mona Passage, distinctly visible.

Of all this Spike appeared to be fully aware, for he quitted the work several times before it was finished, in order to take a look at the stranger and at the land. When the batteries were arranged, he and Mulford, each provided with a glass, gave a few minutes to a more deliberate examination of the first.

"That's the Mona ahead of us," said the captain; "of that there can be no question, and a very pretty landfall you've made of it, Harry. I'll allow you to be as good a navigator as floats."

"Nevertheless, sir, you have not seen fit to let me know whither the brig is really bound this voyage."

"No matter for that, young man—no matter, as yet. All in good time. When I tell you to lay your course for the Mona, you can lay your course for the Mona; and, as soon as we are through the passage, I'll let you know what is wanted next—if that bloody chap who is nearing us will let me."

"And why should any vessel wish to molest us on our passage, Captain Spike?"

"Why, sure enough! It's war times, you know; and war times always bring trouble to the trader—though it sometimes brings profit, too."

As Spike concluded he gave his mate a knowing wink, which the other understood to mean that he expected himself some of the unusual profit to which he alluded. Mulford did not relish this secret communication, for the past had induced him to suspect the character of the trade in which his commander was accustomed to engage. Without making any sort of reply, or encouraging the confidence by even a smile, he leveled his glass at the stranger, as did Spike, the instant he ceased to grin.

"That's one of Uncle Sam's fellows!" exclaimed the captain, dropping the glass. "I'd swear to the chap in any admiralty court on 'arth!"

"'Tis a vessel of war, out of all doubt," returned the mate, "and under a cloud of canvas. I can make out the heads of her courses now, and see that she is carrying hard, for a craft that is almost close-hauled."

"Ay, ay; no merchantman keeps his light stun'-sails set as near the wind as that fellow's going. He's a big chap, too, a frigate, at least, by his canvas."

"I do not know, sir; they build such heavy corvettes nowadays, that I should rather take her for one of them. They tell me ships are now sent to sea which mount only two-and-twenty guns, but which measure quite a thousand tons."

"With thunderin' batteries, of course."

"With short thirty-twos and a few rapping sixty-eight Paixhans—or columbiads, as they ought in justice to be called."

"And you think this chap likely to be a craft of that sort?"

"Nothing is more probable, sir. Government has several, and, since this war has commenced, it has been sending off cruiser after cruiser into the gulf. The Mexicans dare not send a vessel of war to sea, which would be sending them to Norfolk or New York at once; but no one can say when they may begin to make a prey of our commerce."

"They have taken nothing as yet, Mr. Mulford; and, to tell you the truth, I'd much rather fall in with one of Don Montezuma's craft than one of Uncle Sam's."

"That is a singular taste for an American, Captain Spike, unless you think, now our guns are mounted, we can handle a Mexican," returned Mulford, coldly. "At all events, it is some answer to those who ask, 'What is the navy about?' that months of war have gone by, and not an American has been captured. Take away that navy, and the insurance offices in Wall Street would tumble like a New York party-wall in a fire."

"Nevertheless, I'd rather take my chance, just now, with Don Montezuma than with Uncle Sam."

Mulford did not reply, though the earnest manner in which Spike expressed himself helped to increase his distrust touching the nature of the voyage. With *him* the captain had no further conference; but it was different as respects the boatswain. That worthy was called aft, and for half an hour he and Spike were conversing apart, keeping their eyes fastened on the strange vessel most of the time.

It was noon before all uncertainty touching the character of the stranger ceased. By that time, however, both vessels were entering the Mona Passage; the brig well to windward, on the Porto Rico side; while the ship was so far to leeward as to be compelled to keep everything close-hauled, in order to weather the island. The hull of the last could now be seen, and no doubt was entertained about her being a cruiser, and one of some size, too. Spike thought she was a frigate, but Mulford still inclined to the opinion that she was one of the new ships; perhaps a real corvette, or with a light spar-deck over her batteries. Two or three of the new vessels were known to be thus fitted, and this might be one. At length all doubt on the subject ceased, the stranger setting an American ensign, and getting so near as to make it apparent that she had but a single line of guns. Still she was a large ship, and the manner in which she plowed through the brine, close-hauled as she was, extorted admiration from Spike.

"We had better begin to shorten sails, Mr. Mulford," the captain at length most reluctantly remarked. "We might give the chap the slip, perhaps, by keeping

close in under Porto Rico, but he would give us a long chase, and might drive us away to windward, when I wish to keep off between Cuba and Jamaica. He's a traveler; look, how he stands up to it under that cloud of canvas!"

Mulford was slow to commence on the studding-sails, and the cruiser was getting nearer and nearer. At length a gun was fired, and a heavy shot fell about two hundred yards short of the brig, and a little out of line with her. On this hint, Spike turned the hands up, and began to shorten sail. In ten minutes the *Swash* was under her topsail, mainsail, and jib, with her light sails hanging in the gear, and all the steering canvas in. In ten minutes more the cruiser was so near as to admit of the faces of the three or four men whose heads were above the hammock-clothes being visible, when she too began to fold her wings. In went *her* royals, topgallant-sails, and various kites, as it might be by some common muscular agency, and up went her courses. Everything was done at once. By this time she was crossing the brig's wake, looking exceedingly beautiful, with her topsails lifting, her light sails blowing out, and even her heavy courses fluttering in the breeze. There flew the glorious stars and stripes also; of brief existence, but full of recollections! The moment she had room, her helm went up, her bows fell off, and down she came on the weather quarter of the *Swash* so near as to render a trumpet nearly useless.

On board the brig, everybody was on deck; even the relict having forgotten her mortification in curiosity. On board the cruiser, no one was visible, with the exception of a few men in each top, and a group of gold-banded caps on the poop. Among these officers stood the captain, a red-faced, middle-aged man, with the usual signs of his rank about him; and at his side was his lynx-eyed first lieutenant. The surgeon and purser were also there, though they stood a little apart from the more nautical dignitaries. The hail that followed came out of a trumpet that was thrust through the mizzen rigging, the officer who used it taking his cue from the poop.

"What brig is that?" commenced the discourse.

"The *Molly Swash*, of New York, Stephen Spike master."

"Where from, and whither bound?"

"From New York, and bound to Key West and a market."

A pause succeeded this answer, during which the officers on the poop of the cruiser held some discourse with him of the trumpet. During the interval the cruiser ranged fairly up abeam.

"You are well to windward of your port, sir," observed he of the trumpet, significantly.

"I know it; but it's war times, and I didn't know but there might be picaroons hovering about the Havana."

"The coast is clear, and our cruisers will keep it so. I see you have a battery, sir!"

"Ay, ay; some old guns that I've had aboard these ten years: they're useful, sometimes, in these seas."

"Very true. I'll range ahead of you, and as soon as you've room, I'll thank you to heave-to. I wish to send a boat on board you."

Spike was sullen enough on receiving this order, but there was no help for it. He was now in the jaws of the lion, and his wisest course was to submit to the penalties of his position with the best grace he could. The necessary orders were consequently given, and the brig no sooner got room than she came by the wind, and backed her topsail. The cruiser went about, and, passing to windward, backed her main-topsail just forward of the *Swash's* beam. Then the former lowered a boat, and sent it, with a lieutenant and a midshipman in its stern-sheets, on board the brigantine. As the cutter approached, Spike went to the gangway to receive the strangers.

Although there will be frequent occasion to mention this cruiser, the circumstances are of so recent occurrence that we do not choose to give either her name or that of any one belonging to her. We shall, consequently, tell the curious, who

may be disposed to turn to their navy-lists and blue-books, that the search will be of no use, as all the names we shall use, in reference to this cruiser, will be fictitious. As much of the rest of our story as the reader please may be taken for gospel; but we tell him frankly, that we have thought it most expedient to adopt assumed names in connection with this vessel and all her officers. There are good reasons for so doing; and, among others, is that of abstaining from arming a *clique* to calumniate her commander (who, by the way, like another commander in the Gulf that might be named, and who has actually been exposed to the sort of *tracasserie* to which there is allusion, is one of the very ablest men in the service), in order to put another in his place.

The officer who now came over the side of the *Swash* we shall call Wallace; he was the second lieutenant of the vessel of war. He was about thirty, and the midshipman who followed him was a well-grown lad of nineteen. Both had a decided man-of-war look, and both looked a little curiously at the vessel they had boarded.

"Your servant, sir," said Wallace, touching his cap in reply to Spike's somewhat awkward bow. "Your brig is the *Molly Swash*, Stephen Spike, bound from New York to Key West and a market."

"You've got it all as straight, lieutenant, as if you was a readin' it from the log."

"The next thing, sir, is to know of what your cargo is composed?"

"Flour; eight hundred barrels of flour."

"Flour! Would you not do better to carry that to Liverpool? The Mississippi must be almost turned into paste by the quantity of flour it floats to market."

"Notwithstanding that, lieutenant, I know Uncle Sam's economy so well, as to believe I shall part with every barrel of my flour to his contractors, at a handsome profit."

"You read Whig newspapers principally, I rather think, Mr. Spike," answered Wallace, in his cool, deliberate way, smiling, however, as he spoke.

We may just as well say here, that nature intended this gentleman for a second lieutenant, the very place he filled. He was a capital second lieutenant, while he could not have earned the rations as first. So well was he assured of this peculiarity in his moral composition, that he did not wish to be the first lieutenant of anything in which he sailed. A respectable seaman, a well-read and intelligent man, a capital deck officer, or watch officer, he was too indolent to desire to be anything more, and was as happy as the day was long in the easy berth he filled. The first lieutenant had been his messmate as a midshipman, and ranked him but two on the list in his present commission; but he did not envy him in the least. On the contrary, one of his greatest pleasures was to get "Working Willy," as he called his senior, over a glass of wine, or a tumbler of "hot stuff," and make him recount the labors of the day. On such occasions, Wallace never failed to compare the situation of "Working Willy" with his own gentlemanlike ease and independence. As second lieutenant, his rank raised him above most of the unpleasant duty of the ship, while it did not raise him high enough to plunge him into the never-ending labors of his senior. He delighted to call himself the "ship's gentleman," a *sobriquet* he well deserved on more accounts than one.

"You read Whig newspapers principally, I rather think, Mr. Spike," answered the lieutenant, as has been just mentioned, "while we on board the *Poughkeepsie* indulge in looking over the columns of the "Union," as well as over those of the "Intelligencer," when by good luck we can lay our hands on a stray number."

"That ship, then, is called the *Poughkeepsie*, is she, sir?" inquired Spike.

"Such is her name, thanks to a most beneficent and sage provision of Congress, which has extended its parental care over the navy so far as to imagine that a man chosen by the people to exercise so many of the functions of a sovereign is not fit to name a ship. All our two and three-deckers are to be called after States; the frigates after rivers; and the sloops after

towns. Thus it is that our craft has the honor to be called the United States ship the *Poughkeepie,* instead of the *Arrow,* or the *Wasp,* or the *Curlew,* or the *Petrel,* as might otherwise have been the case. But the wisdom of Congress is manifest, for the plan teaches us sailors geography."

"Yes, sir; yes, one can pick up a bit of l'arnin' in that way cheap. The *Poughkeepsie,* Captain—"

"The United States ship *Poughkeepsie,* 20, Captain Adam Mull, at your service. But, Mr. Spike, you will allow me to look at your papers. It is a duty I like, for it can be performed quietly, and without any fuss."

Spike looked distrustfully at his new acquaintance, but went for his vessel's papers without any very apparent hesitation. Everything was *en regle,* and Wallace soon got through with the clearance, manifest, etc. Indeed, the cargo, on paper at least, was of the simplest and least complicated character, being composed of nothing but eight hundred barrels of flour.

"It all looks very well on paper, Mr. Spike," added the boarding officer. "With your permission, we will next see how it looks in sober reality. I perceive your main hatch is open, and I suppose it will be no difficult matter just to take a glance at your hold."

"Here is a ladder, sir, that will take us at once to the half-deck, for I have no proper twixt-decks in this craft; she's too small for that sort of outfit."

"No matter, she has hold enough, I suppose, and that can contain cargo. Take me to it by the shortest road, Mr. Spike, for I am no great admirer of trouble."

Spike now led the way below, Wallace following, leaving the midshipman on deck, who had fallen into conversation with the relict and her pretty niece. The half-deck of the brigantine contained spare sails, provisions, and water, as usual, while quantities of old canvas lay scattered over the cargo; more especially in the wake of the hatches, of which there were two besides that which led from the quarter-deck.

"Flour to the number of eight hundred barrels," said Wallace, striking his foot against a barrel that lay within his reach. "The cargo is somewhat singular to come from New York, going to Key West, my dear Spike."

"I suppose you know what sort of a place Key West is, sir; a bit of an island in which there is scarce so much as a potato grown."

"Ay, ay, sir; I know Key West very well, having been in and out a dozen times. All eatables are imported, turtle excepted. But flour can be brought down the Mississippi so much cheaper than it can be brought from New York."

"Have you any idee, lieutenant, what Uncle Sam's men are paying for it at *New Orleans,* just to keep soul and bodies together among the so'gers?"

"That may be true, sir—quite true, I daresay, Mr. Spike. Haven't you a bit of a chair that a fellow can sit down on—this half-deck of yours is none of the most comfortable places to stand in. Thank you, sir—thank you, with all my heart. What lots of old sails you have scattered about the hold, especially in the wake of the hatches!"

"Why, the craft being little more than in good ballast trim, I keep the hatches off to air her; and the spray might spit down upon the flour at odd times but for them 'ere sails."

"Ay, a prudent caution. So you think Uncle Sam's people will be after this flour as soon as they learn you have got it snug in at Key West?"

"What more likely, sir? You know how it is with our government—always wrong, whatever it does! and I can show you paragraphs in letters written from *New Orleans* which tell us that Uncle Sam is paying seventy-five and eighty per cent more for flour than anybody else."

"He must be a flush old chap to be able to do that, Spike."

"Flush! I rather think he is. Do you know that he is spendin' accordin' to approved accounts, at this blessed moment, as much as half a million a day? I own a wish to be pickin' up some of the coppers

while they are scattered about so plentifully."

"Half a million a day! why, that is only at the rate of $187,000,000 per annum; a mere trifle, Spike, that is scarce worth mentioning among us mariners."

"It's so in the newspapers, I can swear, lieutenant."

"Ay, ay, and the newspapers will swear to it, too, and they that give the newspapers their cue. But no matter, our business is with this flour. Will you sell us a barrel or two for our mess? I heard the caterer say we should want flour in the course of a week or so."

Spike seemed embarrassed, though not to a degree to awaken suspicion in his companion.

"I never sold cargo at sea, long as I've sailed and owned a craft," he answered, as if uncertain what to do. "If you'll pay the price I expect to get in the Gulf, and will take *ten* barrels, I don't know but we may make a trade on't. I shall only ask expected prices."

"Which will be—"

"Ten dollars a barrel. For one hundred silver dollars I will put into your boat ten barrels of the very best brand known in the Western country."

"This is dealing rather more extensively than I anticipated, but we will reflect on it."

Wallace now indolently arose and ascended to the quarter-deck, followed by Spike, who continued to press the flour on him, as if anxious to make money. But the lieutenant hesitated about paying a price so high as ten dollars, or to take a quantity as large as ten barrels.

"Our mess is no great matter after all," he said carelessly. "Four lieutenants, the purser, two doctors, the master, and a marine officer, and you get us all. Nine men could never eat ten barrels of flour, my dear Spike, you will see for yourself, with the quantity of excellent bread we carry. You forget the bread."

"Not a bit of it, Mr. Wallace, since that is your name. But such flour as this of mine has not been seen in the Gulf this many a day. I ought in reason to ask twelve dollars for it, and insist on such a ship as your'n's taking twenty instead of ten barrels."

"I thank you, sir, the ten will more than suffice; unless, indeed, the captain wants some for the cabin. How is it with your steerage messes, Mr. Archer—do *you* want any flour?"

"We draw a little from the ship, according to rule, sir, but we can't go as many puddings latterly as we could before we touched last at the Havana," answered the laughing midshipman. "There isn't a fellow among us, sir, that could pay a shore-boat for landing him, should we go in again before the end of another month. I never knew such a place as Havana. They say midshipmen's money melts there twice as soon as lieutenants' money."

"It's clear, then, *you'll* not take any of the ten. I am afraid, after all, Mr. Spike, we cannot trade, unless you will consent to let me have two barrels. I'll venture on two at ten dollars, high as the price is."

"I shouldn't forgive myself in six months for making so bad a bargain, lieutenant, so we'll say no more about it, if you please."

"Here is a lady that wishes to say a word to you, Mr. Wallace, before we go back to the ship, if you are at leisure to hear her, or *them*—for there are two of them," put in Archer.

At this moment Mrs. Budd was approaching with a dignified step, while Rose followed timidly a little in the rear. Wallace was a good deal surprised at this application, and Spike was quite as much provoked. As for Mulford, he watched the interview from a distance, a great deal more interested in its result than he cared to have known, more especially to his commanding officer. Its object was to get a passage in the vessel of war.

"You are an officer of that Uncle Sam vessel," commenced Mrs. Budd, who thought that she would so much the more command the respect and attention of her listener, by showing him early how familiar she was with even the slang dialect of the seas.

"I have the honor, ma'am, to belong to that Uncle Sam craft," answered Wallace gravely, though he bowed politely at the same time, looking intently at the beautiful girl in the background as he so did.

"So I've been told, sir. She's a beautiful vessel, lieutenant, and is full-jiggered, I perceive."

For the first time in his life, or at least, for the first time since his first cruise, Wallace wore a mystified look, being absolutely at a loss to imagine what "full-jiggered" could mean. He only looked, therefore, for he did not answer.

"Mrs. Budd means that you've a full-*rigged* craft," put in Spike, anxious to have a voice in the conference, "this vessel being only a *half*-rigged brig."

"Oh! ay; yes, yes—the lady is quite right. We are full-jiggered from our dead-eyes to our eye-bolts."

"I thought as much, sir, from your ground hamper and top-tackles," added the relict smiling. "For my part, there is nothing in nature that I so much admire as a full-jiggered ship, with her canvas out of the bolt-ropes, and her clew-lines and clew-garnets braced sharp, and her yards all abroad."

"Yes, ma'am, it is just as you say, a very charming spectacle. Our baby was born full grown and with all her hamper aloft just as you see her. Some persons refer vessels to art, but I think you are quite right in referring them to nature."

"Nothing *can* be more natural to me, lieutenant, than a fine ship standing on her canvas. It's an object to improve the heart and to soften the understanding."

"So I should think, ma'am," returned Wallace, a little quizzically, "judging from the effect on yourself."

This speech, unfortunately, timed as it was, wrought a complete change in Rose's feelings, and she no longer wished to exchange the *Swash* for the *Poughkeepsie*. She saw that her aunt was laughed at in secret, and that was a circumstance that never failed to grate on every nerve in her system. She had been prepared to second and sustain the intended application—she was now determined to oppose it.

"Yes, sir," resumed the unconscious relict, "and to soften the understanding. Lieutenant, did you ever cross the Capricorn?"

"No less than six times; three going and three returning, you know."

"And did Nepture come on board you, and were you shaved?"

"Everything was done *secundum artem*, ma'am. The razor was quite an example of what are called in poetry 'thoughts too deep for tears.'"

"That must have been delightful. As for me, I'm quite a devotee of Neptune's; but I'm losing time, for no doubt your ship is all ready to pull away and carry on sail—"

"Aunt, may I say a word to you before you go any further," put in Rose in her quiet but very controlling way.

The aunt complied, and Wallace, as soon as left alone, felt like a man who was released from a quicksand, into which every effort to extricate himself only plunged him so much the deeper. At this moment the ship hailed, and the lieutenant took a hasty leave of Spike, motioned to the midshipman to precede him, and followed the latter into his boat. Spike saw his visitor off in person, tending the side, and offering the man-ropes with his own hands. For this civility Wallace thanked him, calling out as his boat pulled him from the brig's side—"If we '*pull* away,'" accenting the 'pull' in secret derision of the relict's mistake, "*you* can *pull* away; our filling the topsail being a sign for you to do the same."

"There you go, and joy go with you," muttered Spike, as he descended from the gangway. "A pretty kettle of fish would there have been cooked had I let him have his two barrels of flour."

The man-of-war's cutter was soon under the lee of the ship, where it discharged its freight, when it was immediately run up. During the whole time Wallace had been absent, Captain Mull and his officers remained on the poop, principally occupied in examining and discussing the merits of the *Swash*. No sooner had their officer returned, however, than an order was given to fill away, it being supposed

that the *Poughkeepsie* had no further concern with the brigantine. As for Wallace, he ascended the poop and made the customary report.

"It's a queer cargo to be carrying to Key West from the Atlantic coast," observed the captain, in a deliberating sort of manner, as if the circumstances excited suspicion; yet the Mexicans can hardly be in want of any such supplies."

"Did you *see* the flour, Wallace?" inquired the first lieutenant, who was well aware of his messmate's indolence.

"Yes, sir, and *felt* it too. The lower hold of the brig is full of flour, and of nothing else."

"Wear round, sir—wear round and pass athwart the brig's wake," interrupted the captain. There's plenty of room now, and I wish to pass as near that craft as we can."

This maneuver was executed. The sloop-of-war no sooner filled her main-topsail than she drew ahead, leaving plenty of room for the brigantine to make sail on her course. Spike did not profit by this opening, however, but he sent several men aloft forward, where they appeared to be getting ready to send down the upper yards and the topgallant-mast. No sooner was the sloop-of-war's helm put up than that vessel passed close along the brigantine's weather side, and kept off across her stern on her course. As she did this, the canvas was fluttering aboard her, in the process of making sail, and Mull held a short discourse with Spike.

"Is anything the matter aloft?" demanded the man-of-war's man.

"Ay, ay; I've sprung my topgallant-mast, and think this a good occasion to get another up in it's place."

"Shall I lend you a carpenter or two, Mr. Spike?"

"Thank'ee, sir; thank'ee with all my heart; but we can do without them. It's an old stick, and its high time a better stood where it does. Who knows but I may be chased and feel the want of reliable spars!"

Captain Mull smiled, and raised his cap in the way of an adieu, when the conversation ended; the *Poughkeepsie* sliding off rapidly with a free wind, leaving the *Swash* nearly stationary. In ten minutes the two vessels were more than a mile apart; in twenty, beyond the reach of shot.

Notwithstanding the natural and common-place manner in which this separation took place, there was much distrust on board each vessel, and a good deal of consummate management on the part of Spike. The latter knew that every foot the sloop-of-war went on her course, carried her just so far to leeward, placing his own brig to that extent dead to windward of her. As the *Swash's* best point of sailing, relatively considered, was close-hauled, this was giving to Spike a great security against any change of purpose on the part of the vessel of war. Although his people were aloft and actually sent down the topgallant-mast, it was only to send it up again, the spar being of admirable toughness, and as sound as the day it was cut.

"I don't think, Mr. Mulford," said the captain, sarcastically, "that Uncle Sam's glasses are good enough to tell the difference in wood at two leagues' distance, so we'll trust to the old stick a little longer. Ay, ay, let 'em run off before it, we'll find another road by which to reach our port."

"The sloop-of-war is going round the south side of Cuba, Captain Spike," answered the mate, "and I have understood you to say that you intended to go by the same passage."

"A body may change his mind, and no murder. Only consider, Harry, how common it is for folks to change their minds. I *did* intend to pass between Cuba and Jamaica, but I intend it no longer. Our run from Montauk has been uncommon short, and I've time enough to spare to go to the southward of Jamaica, too, if the notion takes me."

"That would greatly prolong the passage, Captain Spike—a week at least."

"What if it does? I've a week to spare; we're nine days afore our time."

"Our time for what, sir? Is there any particular time set for a vessel's going into Key West?"

"Don't be womanish and over-cur'ous, Mulford. I sail with sealed orders, and when we get well to windward of Jamaica, 'twill be time enough to open them."

Spike was as good as his word. As soon as he thought the sloop-of-war was far enough to leeward, or when she was hull down, he filled away and made sail on the wind to get nearer to Porto Rico. Long ere it was dark he had lost sight of the sloop-of-war, when he altered his course to southwesterly, which was carrying him in the direction he named, or to windward of Jamaica.

While this artifice was being practiced on board the *Molly Swash*, the officers of the *Poughkeepsie* were not quite satisfied with their own mode of proceeding with the brigantine. The more they reasoned on the matter the more unlikely it seemed to them that Spike could be really carrying a cargo of flour from New York to Key West, in the expectation of disposing of it to the United States contractors, and the more out of the way did he seem to be in running through the Mona Passage.

"His true course should have been by the Hole in the Wall, and so down along the north side of Cuba, before the wind," observed the first lieutenant. "I wonder that never struck you, Wallace; *you*, who so little like trouble."

"Certainly, I knew it, but we lazy people like running off before the wind, and I did not know but such were Mr. Spike's tastes," answered the ship's gentleman. "In my judgment, the reluctance he showed to letting us have any of his flour is much the most suspicious circumstance in the whole affair."

These two speeches were made on the poop, in the presence of the captain, but in a sort of an aside that admitted of some of the familiarity the ward-room exhibited. Captain Mull was not supposed to hear what passed, though hear it he in fact did, as was seen by his own remarks, which immediately succeeded.

"I understood you to say, Mr. Wallace," observed the captain, a little dryly, "that you *saw* the flour yourself?"

"I saw the flour-*barrels*, sir; and as regularly built were they as any barrels that ever were branded. But a flour-barrel *may* have contained something besides *flour*."

"Flour usually makes itself visible in the handling; were these barrels quite clean?"

"Far from it, sir. They showed flour on their staves, like any other cargo. After all, the man may have more sense than we give him credit for, and find a high market for his cargo."

Captain Mull seemed to muse, which was a hint for his juniors not to continue the conversation, but rather to seem to muse, too. After a short pause the captain quietly remarked: "Well, gentlemen, he will be coming down after us, I suppose, as soon as he gets his new top-gallant-mast on-end, and then we might keep a bright lookout for him. We shall cruise off Cape San Antonio for a day or two, and no doubt shall get another look at him. I should like to have one baking from his flour."

But Spike had no intention to give the *Poughkeepsie* the desired opportunity. As has been stated, he stood off to the southward on a wind, and completely doubled the eastern end of Jamaica when he put his helm up, and went, with favoring wind and current, toward the northward and westward. The consequence was that he did not fall in with the *Poughkeepsie* at all, which vessel was keeping a sharp lookout for him in the neighborhood of Cape San Antonio and the Isle of Pines, at the very moment he was running down the coast of Yucatan. Of all the large maritime countries of the world, Mexico, on the Atlantic, is that which is the most easily blockaded by a superior naval power. By maintaining a proper force between Key West and the Havana, and another squadron between Cape San Antonio and Loggerhead Key, the whole country, the bay of Honduras excepted, is shut up, as it might be in a bandbox. It is true the Gulf would be left open to the Mexicans, were not squadrons kept nearer in; but as for anything getting out into the broad Atlantic, it would be next to hopeless. The distance

to be watched between the Havana and Key West is only about sixty miles, while that in the other direction is not much greater.

While the *Swash* was making the circuit of Jamaica, as described, her captain had little communication with his passengers. The misunderstanding with the relict embarrassed him as much as it embarrassed her; and he was quite willing to let time mitigate her resentment. Rose would be just as much in his power a fortnight hence as she was to-day. This cessation in the captain's attentions gave the females greater liberty, and they improved it, singularly enough as it seemed to Mulford, by cultivating a strange sort of intimacy with Jack Tier. The very day that succeeded the delicate conversation with Mrs. Budd, to a part of which Jack had been an auditor, the uncouth-looking steward's assistant was seen in close conference with the pretty Rose, the subject of their conversation being apparently of a most engrossing nature. From that hour, Jack got to be not only a confidant, but a favorite, to Mulford's great surprise. A less inviting subject for *tete-à-tetes* and confidential dialogues, thought the young man, could not well exist; but so it was: woman's caprices are inexplicable; and not only Rose and her aunt, but even the captious and somewhat distrustful Biddy, manifested on all occasions not only friendship, but kindness and consideration for Jack.

"You quite put my nose out o' joint, you Jack Tier, wid 'e lady," grumbled Josh, the steward *de jure*, if not now *de facto*, of the craft, "and I nebber see nuttin' like it!" I s'pose you expect ten dollar, at least, from dem passenger, when we gets in. But I'd have you to know, Misser Jack, if you please, dat a steward be a steward, and he don't like to hab trick played wid him, afore he own face."

"Poh! poh! Joshua," answered Jack, good-naturedly, "don't distress yourself on a consait. In the first place, you've got no nose to be put out of joint; or, if you have really a nose, it has no joint. It's nat'ral for folks to like their own color, and the ladies prefar me because I'm white."

"Not so werry white as all dat, nudder," grumbled Josh. "I see great many whiter dan you. But if dem lady like you so much as to gib you ten dollar, as I expects, when we gets in, I presume you'll hand over half, or six dollar, of dat money, to your superior officer, as is law in de case."

"Do you call six the half of ten, Joshua, my scholar, eh?"

"Well, den, seven, if you like that better. I wants just half, and just half I means to get."

"And half you shall have, maty. I only wish you would just tell me where we shall be when we gets in."

"How I know, white man. Dat belong to skipper, and better ask him. If he don't gib you lick in de chop, p'rhaps he tell you."

As Jack Tier had no taste for "licks in the chops," he did not follow Josh's advice; but his agreeing to give half the ten dollars to the steward kept peace in the cabins. He was even so scrupulous of his word as to hand to Josh a half-eagle that very day—money he had received from Rose; saying he would trust to providence for his own half of the expected *douceur*. This concession placed Jack Tier on high grounds with his "superior officer," and from that time the former was left to do the whole of the customary service of the ladies' cabin.

As respects the vessel, nothing worthy of notice occurred until she had passed Loggerhead Key and was fairly launched in the Gulf of Mexico. Then, indeed, Spike took a step that greatly surprised his mate. The latter was directed to bring all his instruments, charts, etc., and place them in the captain's stateroom, where it was understood they were to remain until the brig got into port. Spike was but an indifferent navigator, while Mulford was one of a higher order than common. So much had the former been accustomed to rely on the latter, indeed, as they approached a strange coast that he could not possibly have taken any step that was not positively criminal,

which would have given his mate more uneasiness than this.

At first Mulford naturally enough suspected that Spike intended to push for some Mexican port, by thus blinding his eyes as to the position of the vessel. The direction steered, however, soon relieved the mate from this apprehension. From the eastern extremity of Yucatan the Mexican coast trends to the westward, and even to the south of west, for a long distance, whereas the course steered by Spike was northeastly. This was diverging from the enemy's coast instead of approaching it, and the circumstance greatly relieved the apprehensions of Mulford.

Nor was the sequestration of the mate's instruments the only suspicious act of Spike. He caused the brig's paint to be entirely altered, and even went so far toward disguising her as to make some changes aloft. All this was done as the vessel passed swiftly on her course, and everything had been effected, apparently to the captain's satisfaction, when the cry of "Land Ho!" was once more heard. The land proved to be a cluster of low, small islands, part coral, part sand, that might have been eight or ten in number, and the largest of which did not possess a surface of more than a very few acres. Many were the merest islets imaginable, and on one of the largest of the cluster rose a tall, gaunt lighthouse, having the customary dwelling of its keeper at its base. Nothing else was visible; the broad expanse of the blue waters of the Gulf excepted. All the land in sight would not probably have made one field of twenty acres in extent, and that seemed cut off from the rest of the world by a broad barrier of water. It was a spot of such singular situation and accessories, that Mulford gazed at it with a burning desire to know where he was, as the brig steered through a channel between two of the islets, into a capacious and perfectly safe basin, formed by the group, and dropped her anchor in its center.

CHAPTER V.

"He sleeps; but dreams of massy gold
And heaps of pearl. He stretch'd his hands—
He hears a voice—'Ill man, withhold!'
A pale one near him stands." —DANA.

It was near nightfall when the *Swash* anchored among the low and small inlets mentioned. Rose had been on deck, as the vessel approached this singular and solitary haven, watching the movements of those on board, as well as the appearance of objects on the land, with the interest her situation would be likely to awaken. She saw the light and manageable craft glide through the narrow and crooked passages that led into the port, the process of anchoring, and the scene of tranquil solitude that succeeded; each following the other as by a law of nature. The lighthouse next attracted her attention, and, as soon as the sun disappeared, her eyes were fastened on the lantern, in expectation of beholding the watchful and warning fires gleaming there, to give the mariner notice of the position of the dangers that surrounded the place. Minute went by after minute, however, and the customary illumination seemed to be forgotten.

"Why is not this light shining?" Rose asked of Mulford, as the young man came near her, after having discharged his duty in helping to moor the vessel, and in clearing the decks. "All the lighthouses we have passed, and they have been fifty, have shown bright lights at this hour, but this."

"I cannot explain it; nor have I the smallest notion where we are. I have been aloft, and there was nothing in sight but this cluster of low islets, far or near. I did fancy, for a moment, I saw a speck like a distant sail off here to the northward and eastward, but I rather think it was a gull, or some other sea-bird glancing upward on the wing. I mentioned it to the captain when I came down, and he appeared to believe it a mistake. I have watched that light-house closely, too, ever since we came in, and I have not seen the smallest sign of life about it. It is altogether an extraordinary place!"

"One suited to acts of villainy, I fear, Harry!"

"Of that we shall be better judges to-morrow. You, at least, have one vigilant friend, who will die sooner than harm shall come to you. I believe Spike to be thoroughly unprincipled; still he knows he can go so far and no further, and has a wholesome dread of the law. But the circumstance that there should be such a port as this, with a regular light-house, and no person near the last, is so much out of the common way, that I do not know what to make of it."

"Perhaps the light-house-keeper is afraid to show himself in the presence of the *Swash?*"

"That can hardly be, for vessels must often enter the port, if port it can be called. But Spike is as much concerned at the circumstance that the lamps are not lighted as any of us can be. Look, he is about to visit the building in the boat, accompanied by two of his oldest sea-dogs!"

"Why might we not raise the anchor, and sail out of this place, leaving Spike ashore?" suggested Rose, with more decision and spirit than discretion.

"For the simple reason that the act would be piracy, even if I could get the rest of the people to obey my orders, as certainly I could not. No, Rose; you, and your aunt, and Biddy, however, might land at these buildings, and refuse to return, Spike having no authority over his passengers."

"Still he would have the *power* to make us come back to his brig. Look, he has left the vessel's side, and is going directly toward the light-house."

Mulford made no immediate answer, but remained at Rose's side, watching the movements of the captain. The last pulled directly to the islet with the buildings, a distance of only a few hundred feet, the light-house being constructed on a rocky island that was nearly in the center of the cluster, most probably to protect it from the ravages of the waves. The fact, however, proved, as Mulford did not fail to suggest to his companion, that the beacon had been erected less to guide vessels *into* the haven, than to warn mariners at a distance of the position of the whole group.

In less than five minutes after he had landed, Spike himself was seen in the lantern, in the act of lighting its lamps. In a very short time the place was in a brilliant blaze, reflectors and all the other parts of the machinery of the place performing their duties as regularly as if tended by the usual keeper. Soon after, Spike returned on board, and the anchor-watch was set. Then everybody sought the rest that it was customary to take at that hour.

Mulford was on deck with the appearance of the sun; but he found that Spike had preceded him, had gone ashore again, had extinguished the lamps, and was coming alongside of the brig on his return. A minute later the captain came over the side.

"You were right about your sail, last night, a'ter all, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, on coming aft. "There she is, sure enough; and we shall have her alongside to strike cargo out and in, by the time the people have got their breakfasts."

As Spike pointed toward the light-house while speaking, the mate changed his position a little, and saw that a schooner was coming down toward the islets before the wind. Mulford now began to understand the motives of the captain's proceedings, though a good deal yet remained veiled in mystery. He could not tell where the brig was, nor did he know precisely why so many expedients were adopted to conceal the transfer of a cargo so simple as that of flour. But he who was in the secret left but little time for reflection; for, swallowing a hasty breakfast on deck, he issued orders enough to his mate to give him quite as much duty as he could perform, when he again entered the yawl, and pulled toward the stranger.

Rose soon appeared on deck, and she naturally began to question Harry concerning their position and prospects. He was confessing his ignorance, as well as lamenting it, when his companion's sweet face suddenly flushed. She advanced a step eagerly towards the open window of

Spike's stateroom, then compressed her full, rich under lip with the ivory of her upper teeth, and stood a single instant a beautiful statue of irresolution instigated by spirit. The last quality prevailed; and Mulford was really startled when he saw Rose advance quite to the window, thrust in an arm, and turn towards him with his own sextant in her hand. During the course of the passage out, the young man had taught Rose to assist him in observing the longitude; and she was now ready to repeat the practice. Not a moment was lost in executing her intention. Sights were had, and the instrument was returned to its place without attracting the attention of the men, who were all busy in getting up purchases, and in making the other necessary dispositions for discharging the flour.

The observations answered the purpose, though somewhat imperfectly made. Mulford had a tolerable notion of their latitude, having kept the brig's run in his head since quitting Yucatan; and he now found that their longitude was about 83° west from Greenwich. After ascertaining this fact, a glance at the open chart, which lay on Spike's desk, satisfied him that the vessel was anchored within a group of the Dry Tortugas, or at the western termination of the well-known, formidable, and extensive Florida Reef. He had never been in that part of the world before, but had heard enough in sea-gossip, and had read enough in books, to be at once apprised of the true character of their situation. The islets were American; the light-house was American; and the haven in which the *Swash* lay was the very spot in the contemplation of government for an outer man-of-war harbor, where fleets might rendezvous in the future wars of that portion of the world. He now saw plainly enough the signs of the existence of a vast reef, a short distance to the southward of the vessel, that formed a species of sea-wall, or mole, to protect the port against the waves of the Gulf in that direction. This reef he knew to be miles in width.

There was little time for speculation, Spike soon bringing the strange schooner directly alongside of the brig. The two vessels immediately began a scene of activity, one discharging, and the other receiving the flour as fast as it could be struck out of the hold of the *Swash* and lowered upon the deck of the schooner. Mulford, however, had practiced a little artifice, as the stranger entered the haven which drew down upon him an anathema or two from Spike as soon as they were alone. The mate had set the brig's ensign, and this compelled the stranger to be markedly rude or to answer the compliment. Accordingly he had shown the ancient flag of Spain. For thus extorting a national symbol from the schooner, the mate was sharply rebuked at a suitable moment, though nothing could have been more forbearing than the deportment of his commander when they first met.

When Spike returned to his own vessel, he was accompanied by a dark-looking, well-dressed, and decidedly gentlemanlike personage, whom he addressed indifferently, in his very imperfect Spanish, as Don Wan (Don Juan, or John), or Señor Montefalderon. By the latter appellation he even saw fit to introduce the very respectable-looking stranger to his mate. This stranger spoke English well, though with an accent.

"Don Wan has taken all the flour, Mr. Mulford, and intends shoving it over into Cuba, without troubling the custom-house, I believe; but that is not a matter to give *us* any concern, you know."

The wink, and the knowing look by which this speech was accompanied, seemed particularly disagreeable to Don Juan, who now paid his compliments to Rose, with no little surprise betrayed in his countenance, but with the ease and reserve of a gentleman. Mulford thought it strange that a smuggler of flour should be so polished a personage, though his duty did not admit of his bestowing much attention on the little trifling of the interview that succeeded.

For about an hour the work went steadily and rapidly on. During that time Mulford was several times on board the schooner, as indeed, were Josh, Jack

Tier, and others belonging to the *Swash*. The Spanish vessel was Baltimore or clipper built, with a trunk-cabin, and had every appearance of sailing fast. Mulford was struck with her model, and, while on board of her, he passed both forward and aft to examine it. This was so natural in a seaman that Spike, while he noted the proceeding, took it in good part. He even called out to his mate, from his own quarter-deck, to admire this or that point in the schooner's construction. As is customary with the vessels of southern nations, this stranger was full of men, but they continued at their work, some half-dozen of brawny negroes among them shouting their songs as they swayed at the falls, no one appearing to manifest jealousy or concern. At length Tier came near the mate and said :

"Uncle Sam will not be pleased when he hears the reason that the keeper is not in his lighthouse."

"And what is that reason, Jack? If you know it, tell it to me."

"Go aft and look down the companion-way, maty, and see it for yourself."

Mulford did go aft, and he made an occasion to look down into the schooner's cabin, where he caught a glimpse of the persons of a man and a boy, whom he at once supposed had been taken from the lighthouse. This one fact of itself doubled his distrust of the character of Spike's proceedings. There was no sufficient apparent reason why a mere smuggler should care about the presence of an individual more or less in a foreign port. Everything that had occurred looked like preconcert between the brig and the schooner; and the mate was just beginning to entertain the strongest distrust that their vessel was holding treasonable communication with the enemy, when an accident removed all doubt on the subject from his own mind at least. Spike had, once or twice, given his opinion that the weather was treacherous, and urged the people of both crafts to extraordinary exertions, in order that the vessels might get clear of each other as soon as possible. This appeal had set various expedients in motion to second the more regular work of the purchases. Among other things, planks had been laid from one vessel to the other, and barrels were rolled along them with very little attention to the speed or the direction. Several had fallen on the schooner's deck with rude shocks, but no damage was done until one, of which the hoops had not been properly secured, met with a fall, and burst nearly at Mulford's feet.

It was at the precise moment when the mate was returning, from taking his glance into the cabin, toward the side of the *Swash*. A white cloud arose, and half a dozen of the schooner's people sprung for buckets, kids, or dishes, in order to secure enough of the contents of the broken barrel to furnish them with a meal. At first nothing was visible but the white cloud that succeeded the fall, and the scrambling sailors in its midst. No sooner, however, had the air got to be a little clear, than Mulford saw an object lying in the center of the wreck, that he at once recognized for a keg of gunpowder! The captain of the schooner seized this keg, gave a knowing look at Mulford, and disappeared in the hold of his own vessel, carrying with him what was, out of all question, a most material part of the true cargo of the *Swash*.

At the moment when the flour-barrel burst, Spike was below, in close conference with his Spanish or Mexican guest; and the wreck being so soon cleared away, it is probable that he never heard of the accident. As for the two crews, they laughed a little among themselves at the revelation which had been made, as well as at the manner; but to old sea-dogs like them, it was a matter of very little moment whether the cargo was, in reality, flour or gunpowder. In a few minutes the affair seemed to be forgotten. In the course of another hour the *Swash* was light, having nothing in her but some pig-lead, which she used for ballast, while the schooner was loaded to her hatches, and full.

Spike now sent a boat with orders to drop a kedge about a hundred yards from the place where his own brig lay. The schooner warped up to this kedge, and

dropped an anchor of her own, leaving a very short range of cable out, it being a flat calm. Ordinarily the trades prevail at the Dry Tortugas, and all along the Florida Reef. Sometimes, indeed, this breeze sweeps across the whole width of the Gulf of Mexico, blowing home, as it is called—reaching even to the coast of Texas. It is subject, however, to occasional interruptions everywhere, varying many points in its direction, and occasionally ceasing entirely. The latter was the condition of the weather about noon on this day, or when the schooner hauled off from the brig, and was secured at her own anchor.

"Mr. Mulford," said Spike, "I do not like the state of the atmosphere. D'ye see that fiery streak along the western horizon? Well, sir, as the sun gets nearer to that streak there'll be trouble, or I'm no judge of weather."

"You surely do not imagine, Captain Spike, that the sun will be any nearer to that fiery streak, as you call it, when he is about to set, than he is at this moment?" answered the mate, smiling.

"I'm sure of one thing, young man, and that is, that old heads are better than young ones. What a man has once seen, he may expect to see again, if the same leading signs offer. Man the boat, sir, and carry out the kedge, which is still in it, and lay it off here, about three p'ints on our larboard bow."

Mulford had a profound respect for Spike's seamanship, whatever he might think of his principles. The order was consequently obeyed. The mate was then directed to send down various articles out of the top, and to get the top-gallant and royal yards on deck. Spike carried his precautions so far as to have the mainsail lowered, it ordinarily brailing, at that season of the year, with a standing gaff. With this disposition completed, the captain seemed more at his ease, and went below to join Señor Montefalderon in a *siesta*. The Mexican, for such, in truth, was the national character of the owner of the schooner, had preceded him in this indulgence; and most of the people of the brig having laid themselves down to sleep under the heat of the hour, Mulford soon enjoyed another favorable opportunity for a private conference with Rose.

"Harry," commenced the latter, as soon as they were alone, "I have much to tell you. While you have been absent, I have overheard a conversation between this Spanish gentleman and Spike that shows the last is in treaty with the other for the sale of the brig. Spike extolled his vessel to the skies, while Don Wan, as he calls him, complains that the brig is old and cannot last long, to which Spike answered: 'To be sure she is old, Señor Montefalderon, but she will last as long as *your war*, and under a bold captain might be made to return her cost a hundred-fold!' What war can he mean, and to what does such a discourse tend?"

"The war alludes to the war now existing between America and Mexico, and the money to be made is to be plundered at sea, from our own merchant vessels. If Don Juan Montefalderon is really in treaty for the purchase of the brig, it is to convert her into a Mexican cruiser, either public or private."

"But this would be treason on the part of Spike?"

"Not more so than supplying the enemy with gunpowder, as he has just been doing. I have ascertained the reason he was so unwilling to be overhauled by the revenue steamer, as well as the reason why the revenue steamer wished so earnestly to overhaul us. Each barrel of flour contains another of gunpowder, and that has been sold to this Señor Montefalderon, who is doubtless an officer of the Mexican government, and no smuggler."

"He has been at New York, this very summer, I know," continued Rose, "for he spoke of his visit, and made such other remarks as leaves no doubt that Spike expected to find him here on this very day of the month. He also paid Spike a large sum of money in doubloons, and took back the bag to his schooner, when he had done so, after showing the captain enough was left to pay for the brig, could they only agree on the terms of their bargain."

"Ay, ay; it is all plain enough now; Spike has determined on a desperate push for a fortune; and foreseeing it might not soon be in his power to return to New York in safety, he has included his designs on you and your fortune in the plot."

"My fortune! the trifle I possess can scarcely be called a fortune, Harry!"

"It would be a fortune to Spike, Rose; and I shall be honest enough to own it would be a fortune to me. I say this frankly, for I do believe you think too well of me to suppose that I seek you for any other reason than the ardent love I bear your person and character; but a fact is not to be denied because it may lead certain persons to distrust our motives. Spike is poor like myself; and the brig is not only getting to be very old, but she has been losing money for the last twelve months."

Mulford and Rose now conversed long and confidentially on their situation and prospects. The mate neither magnified nor concealed the dangers of both; but freely pointed out the risk to himself in being on board a vessel that was aiding and comforting the enemy. It was determined between them that both would quit the brig the moment an opportunity offered; and the mate even went so far as to propose an attempt to escape in one of the boats, although he might incur the hazards of a double accusation, those of mutiny and larceny, for making the experiment. Unfortunately, neither Rose nor her aunt, nor Biddy, nor Jack Tier, had seen the barrel of powder, and neither could testify as to the true character of Spike's connection with the schooner. It was manifestly necessary, therefore, independently of the risks that might be run by "bearding the lion in his den," to proceed with great intelligence and caution.

This dialogue between Harry and Rose occurred just after the turn in the day and lasted fully an hour. Each had been too much interested to observe the heavens, but, as they were on the point of separating, Rose pointed out to her companion the unusual and most menacing aspect of the sky in the western horizon. It appeared as if a fiery heat was glowing there behind a curtain of black vapor; and what rendered it more remarkable was the circumstance that an extraordinary degree of placidity prevailed in all other parts of the heavens. Mulford scarce knew what to make of it; his experience not going so far as to enable him to explain the novel and alarming appearance. He stepped on a gun and gazed around him for a moment. There lay the schooner, without a being visible on board of her, and there stood the lighthouse, gloomy in its desertion and solitude. The birds alone seemed to be alive and conscious of what was approaching. They were all on the wing, wheeling wildly in the air and screaming discordantly as belonged to their habits. The young man leaped off the gun, gave a loud call to Spike at the companion-way and sprang forward to call all hands.

One minute only was lost, when every seaman on board the *Swash*, from the captain to Jack Tier, was on deck. Mulford met Spike at the cabin door, and pointed toward the fiery column that was booming down upon the anchorage with a velocity and direction that would now admit of no misinterpretation. For one instant that sturdy old seaman stood aghast; gazing at the enemy as one conscious of his impotency might have been supposed to do, who quailed before an assault that he foresaw must prove irresistible. Then his native spirit and, most of all, the effects of training began to show themselves in him, and he became at once not only the man again, but the resolute, practiced, and ready commander.

"Come aft to the spring, men," he shouted; "clap on the spring, Mr. Mulford, and bring the brig head to wind."

This order was obeyed as seamen best obey, in cases of sudden and extreme emergency; or with intelligence, aptitude, and power. The brig had swung nearly round in the desired direction when the tornado struck her. It will be difficult, we do not know but it is impossible, to give a clear and accurate account of what followed. As most of our readers have doubtless felt how great is the power of

the wind, whiffling and pressing different ways in sudden and passing gusts, they have only to imagine this power increased many, many fold, and the baffling currents made furious, as it might be, by meeting with resistance, to form some notion of the appalling strength and frightful inconstancy with which it blew for about a minute.

Notwithstanding the circumstance of Spike's precaution had greatly lessened the danger, every man on the deck of the *Swash* believed the brig was gone when the gust struck her. Over she went, in fact, until the water came pouring in about her half-ports, like so many little cascades, and spouting up through her scupper-holes, resembling the blowing of young whales. It was the whiffling energy of the tornado that alone saved her. As if disappointed in not destroying its intended victim at one swoop, the tornado "let up" in its pressure, like a dexterous wrestler, making a fresh and desperate effort to overturn the vessel by a slight variation in its course. That change saved the *Swash*. She righted, and even rolled in the other direction, or what might be called to windward, with her decks full of water. For a minute longer these baffling, changing gusts continued, each causing the brig to bow like a reed to their power, one lifting as another pressed her down; and then the weight, or the more dangerous part of the tornado was passed, though it continued to blow heavily, always in whiffling blasts, several minutes longer.

During the weight of the gust no one had leisure, or indeed inclination, to look to aught beyond its effect on the brig. Had one been otherwise disposed, the attempt would have been useless, for the wind had filled the air with spray, and near the islets even with sand. The lurid but fiery tinge, too, interposed a veil that no human eye could penetrate. As the tornado passed onward, however, and the winds lulled, the air again became clear, and in five minutes after the moment when the *Swash* lay nearly on her side with her lower yard-arms actually within a few feet of the water, all was still and placid around her, as one is accustomed to see the ocean in a calm of a summer's afternoon. Then it was that those who had been in such extreme jeopardy could breathe freely and look about them. On board the *Swash* all was well—not a rope-yarn had parted or an eye-bolt drawn. The timely precautions of Spike had saved his brig, and great was his joy thereat.

In the midst of the infernal din of the tornado, screams had ascended from the cabin, and the instant he could quit the deck with propriety Mulford sprung below, in order to ascertain their cause. He apprehended that some of the females had been driven to leeward when the brig went over, and that part of the luggage or furniture had fallen on them. In the main cabin, the mate found Señor Montefalderon just quitting his berth, composed, gentleman-like, and collected. Josh was braced in a corner nearly gray with fear, while Jack Tier still lay on the cabin floor, at the last point to which he had rolled. One word sufficed to let Don Juan know that the gust had passed, and the brig was safe, when Mulford tapped at the door of the inner cabin. Rose appeared, pale, but calm and unhurt.

"Is any one injured?" asked the young man, his mind relieved at once as soon as he saw that she who most occupied his thoughts was safe; "we heard screams from this cabin."

"My aunt and Biddy have been frightened," answered Rose, "but neither has been hurt. Oh, Harry, what terrible thing has happened to us? I heard the roaring of—"

"'Twas a tornado," interrupted Mulford eagerly, "but 'tis over. 'Twas one of those sudden and tremendous gusts that sometimes occur within the tropics, in which the danger is usually in the first shock. If no one is injured in this cabin, no one is injured at all."

"Oh, Mr. Mulford—dear Mr. Mulford!" exclaimed the relict, from the corner into which she had been followed and jammed by Biddy. "Oh, Mr. Mulford, are we foundered or not?"

"Heaven be praised, not, my dear

ma'am, though we came nearer to it than I ever was before."

"Are we cap-asided?"

"Nor that, Mrs. Budd; the brig is as upright as a church."

"Upright!" repeated Biddy, in her customary accent, "is it as a church? Sure then, Mr. Mate, 'tis a Presbyterian Church that you mean, and that is always totterin'."

"Catholic, or Dutch—no church in York is more completely up and down than the brig at this moment."

"Get off of me—get off of me, Biddy, and let me rise," said the widow, with dignity. "The danger is over, I see, and, as we return our thanks for it, we have the consolation of knowing that we have done our duty. It is incumbent on all, at such moments, to be at their posts, and to set examples of decision and prudence."

As Mulford saw all was well in the cabin, he hastened on deck, followed by Señor Montefalderon. Just as they emerged from the companion-way, Spike was hailing the forecastle.

"Forecastle, there," he cried, standing on the trunk himself as he did so, and moving from side to side, as if to catch a glimpse of some object ahead.

"Sir," came back from an old salt, who was coiling up rigging in that seat of seamanship.

"Where-away is the schooner? She ought to be dead ahead of us, as we tend now; but blast me if I can see as much as her mastheads."

At this suggestion, a dozen men sprung upon guns, or other objects, to look for the vessel in question. The old salt forward, however, had much the best chance, for he stepped on the heel of the bowsprit, and walked as far out as the knight-heads to command the whole view ahead of the brig. There he stood half a minute, looking first on one side of the head-gear, then the other, when he gave his trousers a hitch, put a fresh quid in his mouth, and called out in a voice almost as hoarse as the tempest that had just gone by:

"The schooner has gone down at her anchor, sir. There's her buoy watching still, as if nothing had happened; but, as for the craft itself, there's not so much as a bloody yard-arm or mast-head of her to be seen!"

This news produced a sensation in the brig at once, as may be supposed. Even Señor Montefalderon, a quiet, gentlemanlike person, altogether superior in deportment to the bustle and fuss that usually mark the manners of persons in trade, was disturbed; for to him the blow was heavy indeed. Whether he were acting for himself, or was an agent of the Mexican government, the loss was much the same.

"Tom is right enough," put in Spike, rather coolly for the circumstances; "that 'ere schooner of yourn has foundered, Don Wan, as any one can see. She must have capsized and filled, for I obsarved they had left the hatches off, meaning, no doubt, to make an end of the storage as soon as they had done sleeping."

"And what has become of all her men, Don Esteben?" for so the Mexican politely called his companion. "Have all my poor countrymen perished in this disaster?"

"I fear they have, Don Wan, for I see no head of any one swimming. The vessel lay so near that island next to it, that a poor swimmer would have no difficulty in reaching the place; but there is no living thing to be seen. But man the boat, men; we will go to the spot, Señor, and examine for ourselves."

There were two boats in the water, and alongside of the brig. One was the *Swash's* yawl, a small but convenient craft, while the other was much larger, fitted with a sail, and had all the appearance of having been built to withstand breezes and seas. Mulford felt perfectly satisfied, the moment he saw this boat, which had come into the haven in tow of the schooner, that it had been originally in the service of the lighthouse keeper. As there was a very general desire among those on the quarter-deck to go to the assistance of the schooner, Spike ordered both boats manned, jumping into the yawl himself, accompanied by Don Juan Montefalderon, and telling Mulford to follow with the larger craft, bringing with him as many of the females as might choose to accompany him. As Mrs. Budd

thought it incumbent on her to be active in such a scene, all did go, including Biddy, though with great reluctance on the part of Rose.

With the buoy for a guide, Spike had no dificulty in finding the spot where the schooner lay. She had scarcely shifted her berth in the least, there having been no time for her even to swing to the gust; but she had probably capsized at the first blast, filled, and gone down instantly. The water was nearly as clear as the calm, mild atmosphere of the tropics; and it was almost as easy to discern the vessel, and all her hamper, as if she lay on a beach. She had sunk as she filled, or on her side, and still continued in that position. As the water was little more than three fathoms deep, the upper side was submerged but a few inches, and her yard-arms would have been out of the water, but for the circumstance that the yards had canted under the pressure.

At first, no sign was seen of any of those who had been on board this ill-fated schooner when she went down. It was known that twenty-one souls were in her, including the man and the boy who had belonged to the lighthouse. As the boat moved slowly over this sad ruin, however, a horrible and startling spectacle came in view. Two bodies were seen, within a few feet of the surface of the water, one grasped in the arms of the other, in the gripe of despair. The man held in the grasp was kept beneath the water solely by the death-lock of his companion, who was himself held where he floated by the circumstance that one of his feet was entangled in a rope. The struggle could not have been long over, for the two bodies were slowly settling toward the bottom when first seen. It is probable that both these men had more than once risen to the surface in their dreadful struggle. Spike seized a boat-hook, and made an effort to catch the clothes of the nearest body, but ineffectually, both sinking to the sands beneath, lifeless, and without motion. There being no sharks in sight, Mulford volunteered to dive and fasten a line to one of these unfortunate men, who Don Juan declared at once was the schooner's captain. Some little time was lost in procuring a lead-line from the brig, when the lead was dropped alongside the drowned. Provided with another piece of the same sort of line, which had a small running bowline around that which was fastened to the lead, the mate made his plunge, and went down with great vigor of arm. It required resolution and steadiness to descend so far into salt water; but Harry succeeded, and rose with the bodies, which came up with the slightest impulse. All were immediately got into the boat, and away the latter went toward the lighthouse, which was nearer and more easy of access than the brig.

It is probable that one of these unfortunate men might have been revived under judicious treatment; but he was not fated to receive it. Spike, who knew nothing of such matters, undertook to direct everything, and, instead of having recourse to warmth and gentle treatment, he ordered the bodies to be rolled on a cask, suspended them by the heels, and resorted to a sort of practice that might have destroyed well men, instead of resuscitating those in whom the vital spark was dormant, if not actually extinct.

Two hours later, Rose, seated in her own cabin, unavoidably overheard the following dialogue, which passed in English, a language that Señor Montefalderon spoke perfectly well, as has been said.

"Well, señor," said Spike, "I hope this little accident will not prevent our final trade. You will want the brig now, to take the schooner's place."

"And how am I to pay you for the brig, Señor Spike, even if I buy her?"

"I'll ventur' to guess there is plenty of money in Mexico. Though they do say the government is so backward about paying. I have always found you punctual, and am not afraid to put faith in you again."

"But I have no longer any money to pay you half in hand, as I did for the powder, when last in New York."

"The bag was pretty well lined with doubloons when I saw it last, señor."

"And do you know where that bag is,

and where there is another that holds the same sum?"

Spike started, and he mused in silence some little time, ere he again spoke.

"I had forgotten," he at length answered. "The gold must all have gone down in the schooner, along with the powder!"

"And the poor men!"

"Why, as for the men, señor, more may be had for the asking, but powder and doubloons will be hard to find when most wanted. Then the men were *poor* men, accordin' to my idees of what an able seaman should be, or they never would have let their schooner turn turtle with them as she did."

"We will talk of the money, Don Esteban, if you please," said the Mexican, with reserve.

"With all my heart, Don Wan—nothing is more agreeable to me than money. How many of them doubloons shall fall to my share if I raise the schooner and put you in possession of your craft again?"

"Can that be done, señor?" demanded Don Juan, earnestly.

"A seaman can do almost anything, in that way, Don Wan, if you will give him time, and means. For one-half the doubloons I can find in the wreck, the job shall be done."

"You can have them," answered Don Juan, quietly, a good deal surprised that Spike should deem it necessary to offer him any part of the sum he might find. "As for the powder, I suppose *that* is lost to my country."

"Not at all, Don Wan. The flour is well-packed around it, and I don't expect it would take any harm in a month. I shall not only turn over the flour to you, just as if nothing had happened, but I shall put four first-rate hands aboard your schooner, who will take her into port for you, with a good deal more sartainty than forty of the men you had. My mate is a prime navigator."

This concluded the bargain, every word of which was heard by Rose, and every word of which she did not fail to communicate to Mulford the moment there was an opportunity. The young man heard it with great interest, telling Rose that he should do all he could to assist in raising the schooner in the hope that something might turn up to enable him to escape in her, taking off Rose and her aunt. As for his carrying her into a Mexican port, let them trust him for that! Agreeably to the arrangement, orders were given that afternoon to commence the necessary preparations for the work, and considerable progress was made in them by the time the *Swash's* people were ordered to knock off work for the night.

After the sun had set, the reaction in the currents again commenced, and it blew for a few hours heavily during the night. Toward morning, however, it moderated; and when the sun reappeared it scarcely ever diffused its rays over a more peaceful or quiet day. Spike caused all hands to be called, and immediately set about the important business he had before him.

In order that the vessel might be as free as possible, Jack Tier was directed to scull the females ashore, in the brig's yawl; Señor Montefalderon, a man of polished manners—as we maintain is very apt to be the case with Mexican gentlemen, whatever may be the opinion of this good republic on the subject just at this moment—asked permission to be of the party. Mulford found an opportunity to beg of Rose, if they landed at the light, to reconnoiter the place well, with a view to ascertain what facilities it could afford in an attempt to escape. They did land at the light, and glad enough were Mrs. Budd, Rose, and Biddy to place their feet on *terra firma*, after so long a confinement to the narrow limits of a vessel.

"Well," said Jack Tier, as they walked up to the spot where the buildings stood, "this is a rum place for a light'us, Miss Rose, and I don't wonder the keeper and his messmates has cleared out."

"I am very sorry to say," observed Señor Montefalderon, whose countenance expressed the concern he really felt, "that the keeper and his only companion, a boy, were on board the schooner, and

have perished in her, in common with so many of my poor countrymen. There are the graves of two whom we buried here last evening, after vain efforts to restore them to life."

"What a dreadful catastrophe it has been, señor!" said Rose, whose sweet countenance eloquently expressed the horror and regret she so naturally felt—"twenty fellow-beings hurried into eternity without even an instant for prayer!"

"You feel for them, señorita; it is natural *you* should, and it is natural that I, their countryman and leader, should feel for them also. I do not know what God has in reserve for my unfortunate country! We may have cruel and unscrupulous men among us, señorita, but we have thousands who are just and brave and honorable."

"So Mr. Mulford tells me, señor, and he has been much in your ports, on the west coast."

"I like that young man, and wonder not a little at his and your situation in this brig," rejoined the Mexican, dropping his voice, so as not to be heard by their companions, as they walked a little ahead of Mrs. Budd and Biddy. "The Señor Spike is scarcely worthy to be *his* commander or *your* guardian."

"Yet you find him worthy of your intercourse and trust, Don Juan?"

The Mexican shrugged his shoulders, and smiled equivocally; still, in a melancholy manner. It would seem he did not deem it wise to push this branch of the subject further, since he turned to another.

"I like the Señor Mulford," he resumed, "for his general deportment and principles, so far as I can judge of him on so short an acquaintance."

"Excuse me, señor," interrupted Rose, hurriedly—"but you never saw *him* until you met him here."

"Never—I understand you, señorita, and can do full justice to the young man's character. I am willing to think he did not know the errand of his vessel, or I should not have seen him now. But what I most like him for is this: Last night, during the gale, he and I walked the deck together for an hour. We talked of Mexico, and of this war, so unfortunate for my country already, and which may become still more so, when he uttered this noble sentiment: 'My country is more powerful than yours, Señor Montefalderon,' he said, 'and in this it has been more favored by God. You have suffered from ambitious rulers and from military rule, while we have been advancing under the arts of peace, favored by a most beneficent Providence. As for this war, I know but little about it, though I daresay the Mexican government may have been wrong in some things that it might have controlled, and some that it might not; but let right be where it will, I am sorry to see a nation that has taken so firm a stand in favor of popular government pressed upon so hard by another that is supposed to be the great support of such principles. America and Mexico are neighbors, and ought to be friends; and while I do not, cannot blame my own country for pursuing the war with vigor, nothing would please me more than to hear peace proclaimed.'"

"That is just like Harry Mulford," said Rose, thoughtfully, as soon as her companion ceased to speak. "I do wish, señor, that there could be no use for this powder that is now buried in the sea."

Don Juan Montefalderon smiled, and seemed a little surprised that the fair young thing at his side should have known of the treacherous contents of the flour barrels. No doubt he found it inexplicable that persons like Rose and Mulford should, seemingly, be united with one like Spike; but, he was too well-bred, and, indeed, too effectually mystified, to push the subject further than might be discreet.

By this time they were near the entrance of the lighthouse, into which the whole party entered, in a sort of mute awe at its silence and solitude. At Señor Montefalderon's invitation, they ascended to the lantern, whence they could command a wide and fair view of the surrounding waters. The reef was much more apparent from that elevation than from below; and Rose could see that numbers of rocks were bare, while on other

parts of it there was the appearance of many feet of water. Rose gazed at it with longing eyes, for, from a few remarks that had fallen from Mulford, she suspected he had hopes of escaping among its channels and coral.

As they descended and walked through the buildings, Rose also took good heed of the supplies the place afforded. There were flour, and beef, and pork, and many other of the common articles of food, as well as water in a cistern that caught it as it flowed from the roof of the dwelling. Water was also to be found in casks — nothing like a spring or a well existing among those islets. All these things Rose noted, putting them aside in her memory for ready reference hereafter.

In the meantime the mariners were not idle. Spike moved his brig, and moored her, head and stern, alongside of the wreck, before the people got their breakfasts. As soon as that meal was ended, both captain and mate set about their duty in earnest. Mulford carried out an anchor on the off-side of the *Swash*, and dropped it at a distance of about eighty fathoms from the vessel's beam. Purchases were brought from both mastheads of the brig to the chain of this anchor, and were hove upon until the vessel was given a heel of more than a streak, and the cable was tolerably taut. Other purchases were got up opposite, and overhauled down, in readiness to take hold of the schooner's masts. The anchor of the schooner was weighed by its buoy-rope, and the chain, after being rove through the upper or opposite hawse-hole, brought in on board the *Swash*. Another chain was dropped astern, in such a way, that when the schooner came upright, it would be sure to pass beneath her keel, some six or eight feet from the rudder. Slings were then sunk over the mastheads, and the purchases were hooked on. Hours were consumed in these preliminary labors, and the people went to dinner as soon as they were completed.

When the men had dined, Spike brought one of his purchases to the windlass, and the other to the capstan, though not until each was bowsed taut by hand; a few minutes having brought the strain so far on everything as to enable a seaman, like Spike, to form some judgment of the likelihood that his preventers and purchases would stand. Some changes were found necessary to equalize the strain, but, on the whole, the captain was satisfied with his work, and the crew were soon ordered to "heave away; the windlass best."

In the course of half an hour the hull of the vessel, which lay on its bilge, began to turn on its keel, and the heads of the spars to rise above the water. This was the easiest part of the process, all that was required of the purchases being to turn over a mass which rested on the sands of the bay. Aided by the long levers afforded by the spars, the work advanced so rapidly, that, in just one hour's time after his people had begun to heave, Spike had the pleasure to see the schooner standing upright, alongside of his own brig, though still sunk to the bottom.

The wreck was secured in this position, by means of guys and preventers, in order that it might not again cant, when the order was issued to hook on the slings that were to raise it to the surface. These slings were the chains of the schooner, one of which went under her keel, while for the other the captain trusted to the strength of the two hawse-holes, having passed the cable out of one and in at the other, in a way to serve his purposes, as has just been stated.

When all was ready, Spike mustered his crew, and made a speech. He told the men that he was about a job that was out of the usual line of their duty, and that he knew they had a right to exact extra pay for such extra work. The schooner contained money, and his object was to get at it. If he succeeded, their reward would be a doubloon a man, which would be earning more than a month's wages by twenty-four hours' work. This was enough. The men wanted to hear no more; but they cheered their commander, and set about their task in the happiest disposition possible.

The reader will understand that the object to be first achieved was to raise

a vessel, with a hold filled with flour and gunpowder, from off the bottom of the bay to its surface. As she stood, the deck of this vessel was about six feet under water, and every one will understand that her weight, so long as it was submerged in a fluid so dense as that of the sea, would be much more manageable than if suspended in the air. The barrels, for instance, were not much heavier than the water they displaced; and the woodwork of the vessel itself was, on the whole, positively lighter than the element in which it had sunk. As for the water in the hold, that was of the same weight as the water on the outside of the craft, and there had not been much to carry the schooner down, besides her iron, the spars that were out of water, and her ballast. This last, some ten or twelve tons in weight, was, in fact, the principle difficulty, and alone induced Spike to have any doubts about his eventual success. There was no foreseeing the result until he had made a trial, however; and the order was again given to "heave away."

To the infinite satisfaction of the *Swash's* crew, the weight was found quite manageable, so long as the hull remained beneath the water. Mulford, with three or four assistants, was kept on board the schooner lightening her, by getting the other anchor off her bows, and throwing the different objects overboard, or on the decks of the brig. By the time the bulwarks reached the surface, as much was gained in this way as was lost by having so much of the lighter wood-work rise above the water. As a matter of course, however, the weight increased as the vessel rose, and more especially as the lower portion of the spars, the bowsprit, boom, etc., from being buoyant assistants, became so much dead weight to be lifted.

Spike kept a watchful eye on his spars, and the extra supports that he had given them. He was moving the whole time, from point to point, feeling shrouds, and backstays, and preventers, in order to ascertain the degree of strain on each, or examining how the purchases stood. As for the crew, they cheered at their toil, incessantly, passing from capstan bars to the handspikes, and *vice versa*. They, too, felt that their task was increasing in resistance as it advanced, and now found it more difficult to gain an inch, than it had been at first to gain a foot. They seemed, indeed, to be heaving their own vessel out, instead of heaving the other craft up, and it was not long before they had the *Swash* heeling over toward the wreck several streaks. The strain, moreover, on everything, became not only severe, but somewhat menacing. Every shroud, backstay, and preventer was as taut as a bar of iron, and the chain-cable that led to the anchor planted off abeam, was as straight as if the brig were riding by it in a gale of wind. One or two ominous surges aloft, also, had been heard, and, though no more than straps and slings settling into their places under hard strains, they served to remind the crew that danger might come from that quarter. Such was the state of things, when Spike called out to "heave and pull," that he might take a look at the condition of the wreck.

Although a great deal remained to be done, in order to get the schooner to float, a great deal had already been done. Her precise condition was as follows: Having no cabin windows, the water had entered her, when she capsized, by the only four apertures her construction possessed. These were the companion-way, or cabin doors; the skylight; the main-hatch, or the large inlet amidships, by which cargo went up and down; and the booby-hatch, which was the counterpart of the companion-way, forward, being intended to admit of ingress to the forecastle, the apartment of the crew. Each of these hatchways or orifices had the usual defenses of "coamings," strong framework around their margins. These coamings rose six or eight inches above the deck, and answered the double purpose of strengthening the vessel, in a part that, without them, would be weaker than common, and of preventing any water that might be washing about the decks from running below. As soon, therefore, as these three apertures, or their coamings, could be raised above the level of

the water of the basin, all danger of the vessel's receiving any further tribute of that sort from the ocean would be over. It was to this end, consequently, that Spike's efforts had been latterly directed, though they had only in part succeeded. The schooner possessed a good deal of sheer, as it is termed; or, her two extremities rose nearly a foot above her center, when on an even keel. This had brought her extremities first to the surface, and it was the additional weight which had consequently been brought into the air that had so much increased the strain, and induced Spike to pause. The deck forward, as far aft as the foremast, and aft as far forward as the center of the trunk, or to the skylight, was above the water, or at least awash; while all the rest of it was covered. In the vicinity of the main-hatch there were several inches of water; enough, indeed, to leave the upper edge of the coamings submerged by about an inch. To raise the keel that inch by means of the purchases, Spike well knew would cost him more labor, and would incur more risk, than all that had been done previously, and he paused before he would attempt it.

The men were now called from the brig, and ordered to come on board the schooner. Spike ascertained by actual measurement how much was wanted to bring the coamings of the main-hatch above the water, until which, he knew, pumping and bailing would be useless. He found it was quite an inch, and was at a great loss to know how that inch should be obtained. Mulford advised another trial with the handspikes and bars, but to this Spike would not consent. He believed that the masts of the brig had already as much pressure on them as they would bear. The mate next proposed getting the main boom off the vessel, and to lighten the craft by cutting away her bowsprit and masts. The captain was well enough disposed to do this, but he doubted whether it would meet with the approbation of "Don Wan," who was still ashore with Rose and her aunt, and who probably looked forward to recovering his gunpowder by means of those very spars. At length the carpenter hit upon a plan that was adopted.

This plan was very simple, though it had its own ingenuity. It will be remembered that water could now only enter the vessel's hold at the main-hatch, all the other hatchways having their coamings above the element. The carpenter proposed, therefore, that the main-hatches which had been off when the tornado occurred, but which had been found on deck when the vessel righted, should now be put on, oakum being first laid along in their rabbeting, and that the cracks should be stuffed with additional oakum, to exclude as much water as possible. He thought that two or three men, by using calking-irons for ten minutes, would make the hatchway so tight that very little water would penetrate. While this was doing, he himself would bore as many holes forward and aft as he could, with a two-inch augur, out of which the water then in the vessel would be certain to run. Spike was delighted with this project, and gave the necessary orders on the spot.

This much must be said of the crew of the *Molly Swash;* whatever they did in their own profession, they did intelligently and well. On the present occasion, they maintained their claim to this character, and were both active and expert. The hatches were soon on, and, in an imperfect manner, calked, While this was doing, the carpenter got into a boat, and going under the schooner's bows, where a whole plank was out of water, he choose a spot between two of the timbers, and bored a hole as near the surface of the water as he dared to do. Not satisfied with one hole, however, he bored many—choosing both sides of the vessel to make them, and putting some aft as well as forward. In a word, in the course of twenty minutes the schooner was tapped in at least a dozen places, and jets of water, two inches in diameter, were spouting from her on each bow, and under each quarter.

Spike and Mulford noted the effect. Some water, doubtless, still worked itself into the vessel about the main-hatch, but

that more flowed from her by means of the outlets just named, was quite apparent. After close watching at the outlets for some time, Spike was convinced that the schooner was slowly rising, the intense strain that still came from the brig producing that effect as the vessel gradually became lighter. By the end of half an hour, there could be no longer any doubt, the holes, which had been bored within an inch of the water, being now fully two inches above it. The auger was applied anew, still nearer to the surface of the sea, and as fresh outlets were made, those that began to manifest a dullness in their streams were carefully plugged.

Spike now thought it was time to take a look at the state of things on deck. Here, to his joy, he ascertained that the coamings had actually risen a little above the water. The reader is not to suppose, by this rising of the vessel, that she had become sufficiently buoyant, in consequence of the water that had run out of her, to float of herself. This was far from being the case; but the constant upward pressure from the brig, which, on mechanical principles, tended constantly to bring that craft upright, had the effect to lift the schooner, as the latter was gradually relieved from the weight that pressed her toward the bottom.

The hatches were next removed, when it was found that the water in the schooner's hold had so far lowered as to leave a vacant space of quite a foot between the lowest part of the deck and its surface. Toward the two extremities of the vessel this space necessarily was much increased, in consequence of the sheer. Men were now sent into the hatchway with orders to hook on to the flour-barrels—a whip having been rigged in readiness to hoist them on deck. At the same time gangs were sent to the pumps, though Spike still depended for getting rid of the water somewhat on the auger—the carpenter continuing to bore and plug his holes as new opportunities offered and the old outlets became useless. It was true this expedient would soon cease, for the water having found its level in the vessel's hold, was very nearly on a level also with that on the outside. Bailing also was commenced, both forward and aft.

Spike's next material advantage was obtained by means of the cargo. By the time the sun had set, fully two hundred barrels had been rolled into the hatchway, and passed on deck, whence about half of them were sent in the lighthouse boat to the nearest islet and the remainder were transferred to the deck of the brig. These last were placed on the off-side of the *Swash*, and aided in bringing her nearer upright. A great deal was gained in getting rid of these barrels. The water in the schooner lowered just as much as the space they had occupied, and the vessel was relieved at once of twenty tons in weight.

Just after the sun had set Señor Don Juan Montefalderon and his party returned on board. They had stayed on the island to the last moment, at Rose's request, for she had taken as close an observation of everything as possible, in order to ascertain if any means of concealment existed, in the event of her aunt, Biddy, and herself quitting the brig. The islets were all too naked and too small, however; and she was compelled to return to the *Swash*, without any hopes derived from this quarter.

Spike had just directed the people to get their suppers as the Mexican came on board. Together they descended to the schooner's deck, where they had a long but secret conference. Señor Montefalderon was a calm, quiet, and reasonable man, and while he felt as one would be apt to feel who had recently seen so many associates swept suddenly out of existence, the late catastrophe did not in the least unman him. It is too much the habit of the American people to receive their impressions from newspapers, which throw off their articles unreflectingly, and often ignorantly, as crones in petticoats utter their gossip. In a word, the opinions thus obtained are very much on a level, in value, with the thoughts of those who are said to think aloud, and who give utterance to all the crudities and trivial humors that may happen to reach their ears. In this manner, we apprehend, very false notions of our neighbors of Mexico have be-

come circulated among us. That nation is a mixed race, and has necessarily the various characteristics of such an origin; and it is, unfortunately, little influenced by the diffusion of intelligence which certainly exists here. Although an enemy, it ought to be acknowledged, however, that even Mexico has her redeeming points. Anglo-Saxons as we are, we have no desire unnecessarily to illustrate that very marked feature in the Anglo-Saxon character, which prompts the mother stock to calumniate all who oppose it, but would rather adopt some of that chivalrous courtesy of which so much that is lofty and commendable is to be found among the descendants of Old Spain.

The Señor Montefalderon was earnestly engaged in what he conceived to be the cause of his country. It was scarcely possible to bring together two men impelled by motives more distinct than Spike and this gentleman. The first was acting under impulses of the lowest and most groveling nature; while the last was influenced by motives of the highest. However much Mexico may, and has, weakened her cause by her own punic faith, instability, military oppression, and political revolutions, giving to the Texans, in particular, ample justification for their revolt, it was not probable that Don Juan Montefalderon saw the force of all the arguments that a casuist of ordinary ingenuity could certainly adduce against his country; for it is a most unusual thing to find a man anywhere who is willing to admit that the positions of an opponent are good. He saw, in the events of the day, a province wrested from his nation; and, in his reasoning on the subject, entirely overlooking the numerous occasions on which his own fluctuating government had given sufficient justification, not to say motives, to their powerful neighbors to take the law into their own hands and redress themselves; he fancied all that has occurred was previously planned; instead of regarding it, as it truly is, as merely the result of political events that no man could have foreseen, that no man had originally imagined, or that any man could control.

Don Juan understood Spike completely, and quite justly appreciated not only his character, but his capabilities. Their acquaintance was not of a day, though it had ever been marked by that singular combination of caution and reliance that is apt to characterize the intercourse between the knave and the honest man, when circumstances compel not only communication, but, to a certain extent, confidence. They now paced the deck of the schooner, side by side, for fully an hour, during which time the price of the vessel, the means, and the mode of payment and transfer were fully settled between them.

"But what will you do with your passengers, Don Esteban?" asked the Mexican, pleasantly, when the more material points were adjusted. "I feel a great interest in the young lady in particular, who is a charming señorita, and who tells me that her aunt brought her this voyage on account of her health. She looks much too blooming to be out of health; and if she were, this is a singular voyage for an invalid to make."

"You don't understand human natur' yet, altogether, I see, Don Wan," answered Spike, chuckling and winking. "As you and I are not only good friends, but what a body may call *old* friends, I'll let you into a secret in this affair, well knowing that you'll not betray it. It's quite true that the old woman thinks her niece is a pulmonary, as they call it, and that this v'y'ge is recommended for her, but the gal is as healthy as she's handsome."

"Her constitution, then, must be very excellent, for it is seldom I have seen so charming a young woman. But if the aunt is misled in this matter, how has it been with the niece?"

Spike did not answer in words, but he leered upon his companion, and he winked.

"You mean to be understood that you are in intelligence with each other, I suppose, Don Esteban?" returned Señor Montefalderon, who did not like the captain's manner, and was willing to drop the discourse.

Spike then informed his companion, in confidence, that he and Rose were affi-

anced, though without the aunt's knowledge; that he intended to marry the niece the moment he reached a Mexican port with the brig, and that it was their joint intention to settle in the country. He added that the affair required management, as his intended had property, and expected more, and he begged Don Juan to aid him, as things drew near to a crisis. The Mexican evaded an answer, and the discourse dropped.

The moon was now shining, and would continue to throw its pale light over the scene for two or three hours longer. Spike profited by the circumstance to continue the work of lightening the schooner. One of the first things done next was to get up the dead, and to remove them to the boat. This melancholy office occupied an hour, the bodies being landed on the islet, near the powder, and there interred in the sands. Don Juan Montefalderon attended on this occasion, and repeated some prayers over the graves, as he had done in the morning, in the cases of the two who had been buried near the lighthouse.

While this melancholy duty was in the course of performance, that of pumping and bailing was continued, under the immediate personal superintendence of Mulford. It would not be easy to define, with perfect clearness, the conflicting feelings by which the mate of the *Swash* was now impelled. He had no longer any doubt on the subject of Spike's treason; and had it not been for Rose, he would not have hesitated a moment about making off in the lighthouse boat for Key West, in order to report all that had passed to the authorities. But not only Rose *was* there, and to be cared for, but what was far more difficult to get along with, her aunt was with her. It is true, Mrs. Budd was no longer Spike's dupe; but, under any circumstances, she was a difficult subject to manage, and more especially so in all matters that related to the sea. Then the young man submitted, more or less, to the strange influence which a fine craft almost invariably obtains over those that belong to her. He did not like the idea of deserting the *Swash*, at the very moment he would not have hesitated about punishing her owner for his many misdeeds. In a word, Harry was too much of a tar not to feel a deep reluctance to turn against his cruise, or his voyage, however much either might be condemned by his judgment, or even by his principles.

It was quite nine o'clock when the Señor Montefalderon and Spike returned from burying the dead. No sooner did the last put his foot on the deck of his own vessel than he felt the fall of one of the purchases which had been employed in raising the schooner. It was so far slack as to satisfy him that the latter now floated by her own buoyancy, though it might be well to let all stand until morning, for the purposes of security. Thus apprised of the condition of the two vessels, he gave the welcome order to "knock off for the night."

CHAPTER VI.

"At the piping of all hands,
When the judgment signal's spread—
When the islands and the land,
And the seas give up their dead.
And the south and the north shall come;
When the sinner is dismayed,
And the just man is afraid,
Then Heaven be thy aid,
Poor Tom." —BRAINARD.

THE people had now a cessation from their toil. Of all the labor known to seafaring men, that of pumping is usually thought to be the most severe. Those who work at it have to be relieved every minute, and it is only by having gangs to succeed each other that the duty can be done at all with anything like steadiness. In the present instance it is true that the people of the *Swash* were sustained by the love of gold, but glad enough were they when Mulford called out to them to "knock off, and turn in for the night." It was high time this summons should be made, for not only were the people excessively wearied, but the customary hours of labor were so far spent, that the light of the moon had sometime before begun to blend with the little left by the parting sun. Glad enough were all hands to quit the toil; and two minutes were scarcely

elapsed ere most of the crew had thrown themselves down, and were buried in deep sleep. Even Spike and Mulford took the rest they needed, the cook alone being left to look out for the changes in the weather. In a word, everybody but this idler was exhausted with pumping and bailing, and even gold had lost its power to charm until nature was recruited by rest.

The excitement produced by the scene through which they had so lately passed caused the females to sleep soundly too. The deathlike stillness which pervaded the vessel contributed to their rest, and Rose never woke, from the first few minutes after her head was on her pillow, until near four in the morning. The deep quiet seemed ominous to one who had so lately witnessed the calm which precedes the tornado, and she arose. In that low latitude and warm season, few clothes were necessary, and our heroine was on deck in a very few minutes. Here she found the same gravelike sleep pervading everything. There was not a breath of air, and the ocean seemed to be in one of its profoundest slumbers. The hard-breathing of Spike could be heard through the open windows of his stateroom, and this was positively the only sound that was audible. The common men who lay scattered about the decks, more especially from the mainmast forward, seemed to be so many logs, and from Mulford no breathing was heard.

The morning was neither very dark nor very light, it being easy to distinguish objects that were near, while those at a distance were necessarily lost in obscurity. Availing herself of the circumstance, Rose went as far as the gangway, to ascertain if the cook were at his post. She saw him lying near his galley, in as profound a sleep as any of the crew. This she felt to be wrong, and she felt alarmed, though she knew not why. Perhaps it was the consciousness of being the only person up and awake at that hour of deepest night, in a vessel so situated as the *Swash*, and in a climate in which hurricanes seem to be the natural offspring of the air. Some one must be aroused, and her tastes, feelings, and judgment all pointed to Harry Mulford as the person she ought to awaken. He slept habitually in his clothes—the lightest summer dress of the tropics; and the window of his little stateroom was always open for the admission of air. Moving lightly to the place, Rose laid her own little, soft hand on the arm of the young man, when the latter was on his feet in an instant. A single moment was only necessary to regain his consciousness, when Mulford left the stateroom and joined Rose on the quarter-deck.

"Why am I called, Rose?" the young man asked, attempering his voice to the calm that reigned around him; "and why am I called by *you*?"

Rose explained the state of the brig, and the feeling which induced her to awaken him. With woman's gentleness she now expressed her regret for having robbed Harry of his rest; had she reflected a moment, she might have kept watch herself, and allowed him to obtain the sleep he must surely so much require.

But Mulford laughed at this; protested he had never been awakened at a more favorable moment, and would have sworn, had it been proper, that a minute's further sleep would have been too much for him. After these first explanations, Mulford walked round the decks, carefully felt how much strain there was on the purchases, and rejoined Rose, to report that all was right, and that he did not consider it necessary to call even the cook. The black was an idler in no sense but that of keeping watch, and he had toiled the past day as much as any of the men, though it was not exactly at the pumps.

A long and semi-confidential conversation now occurred between Harry and Rose. They talked of Spike, the brig and her cargo, and of the delusion of the captain's widow. It was scarcely possible that powder should be so much wanted at the Havana as to render smuggling, at so much cost, a profitable adventure; and Mulford admitted his convictions that the pretended flour was originally intended for Mexico. Rose related the tenor of the conversation she had overheard between

the two parties, Don Juan and Don Esteban, and the mate no longer doubted that it was Spike's intention to sell the brig to the enemy. She also alluded to what had passed between herself and the stranger.

Mulford took this occasion to introduce the subject of Jack Tier's intimacy and favor with Rose. He even professed to feel some jealousy on account of it, little as there might be to alarm most men in the rivalry of such a competitor. Rose laughed as girls will laugh when there is question of their power over the other sex, and she fairly shook her rich tresses as she declared her determination to continue to smile on Jack to the close of the voyage. Then, as if she had said more than she intended, she added, with woman's generosity and tenderness:

"After all, Harry, you know how much I promised to you even before we sailed, and how much more since, and have no just cause to dread even Jack. There is another reason, however, that ought to set your mind entirely at ease on his account. Jack is married, and has a partner living at this very moment, as he does not scruple to avow himself."

A hissing noise, a bright light, and a slight explosion, interrupted the half-laughing girl, and Mulford, turning on his heel quick as thought, saw that a rocket had shot into the air from a point close under the bows of the brig. He was still in the act of moving toward the forecastle, when, at the distance of several leagues, he saw the explosion of another rocket high in the air. He knew enough of the practices of vessels of war to feel certain that these were a signal and its answer from some one in the service of government. Not at all sorry to have the career of the *Swash* arrested, before she could pass into hostile hands, or before evil could befall Rose, Mulford reached the forecastle just in time to answer the inquiry that was immediately put to him in the way of a hail. A gig, pulling four oars only, with two officers in the sternsheets, was fairly under the vessel's bows, and the mate could almost distinguish the countenance of the officer who questioned him, the instant he showed his head and shoulders above the bulwarks.

"What vessels are these?" demanded the stranger, speaking in the authoritative manner of one who acted for the State, but not speaking much above the usual conversational tone.

"American and Spanish," was the answer. "This brig is American—the schooner alongside is a Spaniard, that turned turtle in a tornado, about six-and-thirty hours since, and on which we have been hard at work trying to raise her, since the gale which succeeded the tornado has blown its pipes out."

"Ay, ay, that's the story, is it? I did not know what to make of you, lying cheek by jowl, in this fashion. Was anybody lost on board the schooner?"

"All hands, including every soul aft and forward, the supercargo, excepted, who happened to be aboard here. We buried seventeen of the bodies this afternoon on the smallest of the Keys that you see near at hand, and two this morning alongside of the light. But what boat is that, and where are *you* from, and whom are you signaling?"

"The boat is a gig," answered the stranger, deliberately, "and she belongs to a cruiser of Uncle Sam's that is off the reef, a short bit to the eastward, and we signaled our captain. But I'll come on board you, sir, if you please."

Mulford walked aft to meet the stranger at the gangway, and was relieved, rather than otherwise, at finding Spike was already on the quarter-deck. Should the vessel of war seize the brig, he could rejoice at it; but so strong were his professional ideas of duty to the craft he sailed in, that he did not find it in his heart to say aught against her. Were any mishap to befall it, or were justice to be done, he preferred that it might be done under Spike's own supervision, rather than under his.

"Call all hands, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, as they met. "I see a streak of day coming yonder in the east—let all hands be called at once. What strange boat is this we have alongside?"

The question was put to the strangers,

Spike standing on his gangway-ladder to ask it, while the mate was summoning the crew. The officer saw that a new person was to be dealt with, and in his quiet, easy way, he answered, while stretching out his hand to take the man-rope:

"Your servant, sir—we are man-of-war's men, belonging to one of Uncle Sam's crafts outside, and have just come in to pay you a visit of ceremony. I told one, who I suppose was your mate, that I would just step on board of you."

"Ay, ay—one at a time, if you please. It's war time, and I cannot suffer armed boats' crews to board me at night without knowing something about them. Come up yourself, if you please, but order your people to stay in the boat. Here, muster about this gangway, half a dozen of you, and keep an eye on the crew of this strange boat."

These orders had no effect on the cool and deliberate lieutenant, who ascended the brig's side and immediately stood on the deck. No sooner had he and Spike confronted each other than each gave a little start like that of recognition, and the lieutenant spoke.

"Ay, ay—I believe I know this vessel now. It is the *Molly Swash*, of New York, bound to Key West and a market; and I have the honor to see Captain Stephen Spike again."

It was Mr. Wallace, the second lieutenant of the sloop-of-war that had boarded the brig in the Mona Passage, and to avoid whom Spike had gone to the southward of Jamaica. The meeting was very *mal-à-propos*, but it would not do to betray that the captain and owner of the vessel thought as much as this; on the contrary, Wallace was warmly welcomed and received, not only as an old acquaintance, but as a very agreeable visitor. To have seen the two as they walked aft together one might have supposed that the meeting was conducive of nothing but a very mutual satisfaction, it was so much like that which happens between those who keep up a hearty acquaintance.

"Well, I'm glad to see you again, Captain Spike," cried Wallace, after the greetings were passed; "if it be only to ask where you flew to, the day we left you in the Mona Passage? We looked out for you with all our eyes, expecting you would be down between San Domingo and Jamaica, but I hardly think you got by us in the night. Our master thinks you must have dove, and gone past loon-fashion. Do you ever perform that maneuver?"

"No, we've kept above water the whole time, lieutenant," answered Spike, heartily; "and that is more than can be said of the poor fellow alongside of us. I was so much afraid of the Isle of Pines that I went round Jamaica."

"You might have given the Isle of Pines a berth and still have passed to the north of the Englishmen," said Wallace, a little dryly. "However, that island *is* somewhat of a scarecrow, and we have been to take a look at it ourselves. All's right, there, just now. But you seem light; what have you done with your flour?"

"Parted with every barrel of it. You may remember I was bound to Key West and a market. Well, I found my market here, in American waters."

"You have been lucky, sir. This 'emporium' does not seem to be exactly a *commercial* emporium."

"The fact is, the flour is intended for the Havana; and I fancy it is to be shipped for slavers. But I am to know nothing of all that, you'll understand, lieutenant. If I sell my flour in American waters, at two prices, it's no concern of mine what becomes of it afterward."

"Unless it happen to pass into enemy's hands, certainly not; and you are too patriotic to deal with Mexico, just now, I'm sure. Pray, did that flour go down when the schooner turned turtle?"

"Every barrel of it; but Don Wan, below there, thinks that most of it may yet be saved, by landing it on one of those Keys to dry. Flour, well packed, wets in slowly. You see we have some of it on deck."

"And who may Don Wan be, sir, pray? We are sent here to look after Dons and Donas, you know."

"Don Wan is a Cuban merchant, and deals in such articles as he wants. I fell in with him among the reefs here, where he was rummaging about in hopes of meeting wrack, he tells me, and thinking to purchase something profitable in that way; but finding I had flour, he agreed to take it out of me at this anchorage, and send me away in ballast at once. I have found Don Wan Montefalderon ready to pay, and very honorable."

Wallace then requested an explanation of the disaster, to the details of which he listened with a sailor's interest. He asked a great many questions, all of which bore on the more nautical features of the event; and, day having now fairly appeared, he examined the purchases and backings of the *Swash* with professional nicety. The schooner was no lower in the water than when the men had knocked off work the previous night; and Spike set the people at the pumps and their bailing again, as the most effectual method of preventing their making any indiscreet communications to the man-of-war's men.

About this time the relict appeared on deck, when Spike gallantly introduced the lieutenant anew to his passengers. It is true he knew no name to use, but that was of little moment, as he called the officer "the lieutenant," and nothing else.

Mrs. Budd was delighted with this occasion to show off, and she soon broke out on the easy, indolent, but waggish Wallace, in a strain to surprise him, notwithstanding the specimen of the lady's skill from which he had formerly escaped.

"Captain Spike is of opinion, lieutenant, that our cast-anchor here is excellent, and I know the value of a good cast-anchor place; for my poor Mr. Budd was a seafaring man, and taught me almost as much of your noble profession as he knew himself."

"And he taught you, ma'am," said Wallace, fairly opening his eyes, under the influence of astonishment, "to be very particular about cast-anchor places?"

"Indeed he did. He used to say that roads-instead were never as good, for such purposes, as land that's locked havens, for the anchors would return home, as he called it, in roads-instead."

"Yes, ma'am," answered Wallace, looking very queer at first, as if disposed to laugh outright, then catching a glance of Rose, and changing his mind; "I perceive that Monsieur Budd knew what he was about, and preferred an anchorage where he was well land-locked, and where there was no danger of his anchors coming home, as so often happens in your open roadsteads."

"Yes, that's just it! That was just his notion! You cannot feel how delightful it is, Rose, to converse with one that thoroughly understands such subjects! My poor Mr. Budd did, indeed, denounce roads-instead, at all times calling them 'savage.'"

"Savage, aunt!" put in Rose, helping to stop the good relict by her own interposition—"that is a strange word to apply to an anchorage!"

"Not at all, young lady," said Wallace, gravely. "They are often *wild* berths, and wild berths are not essentially different from wild beasts. Each is savage, as a matter of course."

"I knew I was right!" exclaimed the widow. "Savage cast-anchors come of wild births, as do savage Indians. Oh! the language of the ocean, as my poor Mr. Budd used to say, is eloquence tempered by common sense."

Wallace stared again, but his attention was called to other things just at that moment. The appearance of Don Juan Montefalderon y Castro on deck, reminded him of his duty, and, approaching that gentleman, he condoled with him on the grave loss he had sustained. After a few civil expressions on both sides, Wallace made a delicate allusion to the character of the schooner.

"Under other circumstances," he said, "it might be my duty to inquire a little particularly as to the nationality of your vessel, señor, for we are at war with the Mexicans, as you doubtless know."

"Certainly," answered Don Juan, with an unmoved air and great politeness of manner, "though it would be out of my power to satisfy you. Everything was

lost in the schooner, and I have not a paper of any sort to show you. If it be your pleasure to make a prize of a vessel in this situation, certainly it is in your power to do it. A few barrels of wet flour are scarce worth disputing about."

Wallace now seemed a little ashamed, the *sang froid* of the other throwing dust in his eyes, and he was in a hurry to change the subject. Señor Don Juan was very civilly condoled with again, and he was made to repeat the incidents of the loss, as if his auditor took a deep interest in what he said, but no further hint was given touching the nationality of the vessel. The lieutenant's tact let him see that Señor Montefalderon was a person of very different caliber from Spike, as well as of different habits; and he did not choose to indulge in the quiet irony that formed so large an ingredient in his own character, with this new acquaintance. He spoke Spanish himself, with tolerable fluency, and a conversation now occurred between the two, which was maintained for some time with spirit and a very manifest courtesy.

This dialogue between Wallace and the Spaniard gave Spike a little leisure for reflection. As the day advanced the cruiser came more and more plainly in view, and his first business was to take a good survey of her. She might have been three leagues distant, but approaching with a very light breeze, at the rate of something less than two knots in the hour. Unless there was some one on board her who was acquainted with the channels of the Dry Tortugas, Spike felt little apprehension of the ship's getting very near to him; but he very well understood that, with the sort of artillery that was in modern use among vessels of war, he would hardly be safe could the cruiser get within a league. That near Uncle Sam's craft might certainly come without encountering the hazards of the channels, and within that distance she would be likely to get in the course of the morning should he have the complaisance to wait for her. He determined, therefore, not to be guilty of that act of folly.

All this time the business of lightening the schooner proceeded. Although Mulford earnestly wished that the man-of-war might get an accurate notion of the true character and objects of the brig, he could not prevail on himself to become an informer. In order to avoid the temptation so to do, he exerted himself in keeping the men at their tasks, and never before had pumping and bailing been carried on with more spirit. The schooner soon floated of herself, and the purchases which led to the *Swash* were removed. Near a hundred more barrels of the flour had been taken out of the hold of the Spanish craft, and had been struck on the deck of the brig, or sent to the Key by means of the boats. This made a material change in the buoyancy of the vessel, and enabled the bailing to go on with greater facility. The pumps were never idle, but two small streams of water were running the whole of the time toward the scuppers, and through them into the sea.

At length the men were ordered to knock off, and to get their breakfast. This appeared to arouse Wallace, who had been chatting, quite agreeably to himself, with Rose, and seemed reluctant to depart, but who now became sensible that he was neglecting his duty. He called away his boat's crew, and took a civil leave of the passengers; after which he went over the side. The gig was some little distance from the *Swash*, when Wallace rose and asked to see Spike, with whom he had a word to say at parting.

"I will soon return," he said, "and bring you forty or fifty fresh men, who will make light work with your wreck. I am certain our commander will consent to my doing so, and will gladly send on board you two or three boats' crews."

"If I'll let him," muttered Spike, between his teeth, "I shall be a poor, miserable cast-anchor devil, that's all."

To Wallace, however, he expressed his hearty acknowledgments; begged him not to be in a hurry, as the worst was now over, and the row was still a long one. If he got back toward evening it would be all in good time. Wallace waved his hand, and the gig glided away. As for Spike, he sat down on the plank-

sheer where he had stood, and remained there ruminating intently for two or three minutes. When he descended to the deck his mind was fully made up. His first act was to give some private orders to the boatswain, after which he withdrew to the cabin, whither he summoned Tier, without delay.

"Jack," commenced the captain, using very little circumlocution in opening his mind, "you and I are old shipmates, and ought to be old friends, though I think your natur' has undergone some changes since we last met. Twenty years ago there was no man in the ship on whom I could so certainly depend as on Jack Tier; now, you seem given up altogether to the women. Your mind has changed even more than your body."

"Time does that for all of us, Captain Spike," returned Tier, coolly. "I am *not* what I used to be, I'll own, nor are you yourself for that matter. When I saw you last, noble captain, you were a handsome man of forty, and could go aloft with any youngster in the brig; but now you're heavy, and not overactive."

"I! Not a bit of change has taken place in me for the last thirty years. I defy any man to show to the contrary. But that's neither here nor there; you are no young woman, Jack, that I need be boasting of my health and beauty before you. I want a bit of real sarvice from you, and want it done in old-times' fashion; and I mean to pay for it in old-times' fashion, too."

As Spike concluded, he put into Tier's hand one of the doubloons that he had received from Señor Montefalderon, in payment for the powder. The doubloons, for which so much pumping and bailing were then in process, were still beneath the waters of the gulf.

"Ay, ay, sir," returned Jack, smiling and pocketing the gold, with a wink of the eye and a knowing look; "this does resemble old times sum'at. I now begin to know Captain Spike, my old commander, again, and see that he's more like himself than I had just thought him. What am I to do for this, sir. Speak plain, that I may be sartin to steer the true course."

"Oh, just a trifle, Jack—nothing that will break up the ground-tier of your wits, my old shipmate. You see the state of the brig, and know that she is in no condition for ladies."

"'Twould have been better all round, sir, had they never come aboard at all," answered Jack, looking dark.

Spike was surprised, but he was too much bent on his projects to heed trifles.

"You know what sort of flour they're whipping out of the schooner, and must understand that the brig will soon be in a pretty litter. I do not intend to let them send a single barrel of it beneath my hatches again, but the deck and the islands must take it all. Now I wish to relieve my passengers from the confinement this will occasion, and I have ordered the boatswain to pitch a tent for them on the largest of these here Tortugas; and what I want of you, is to muster food and water, and other women's knick-knacks, and go ashore with them, and make them as comfortable as you can for a few days, or until we can get this schooner loaded and off."

Jack Tier looked at his commander as if he would penetrate his most secret thoughts. A short pause succeeded, during which the steward's mate was intently musing, then his countenance suddenly brightened; he gave the doubloon a fillip, and caught it on the palm of his hand as it descended, and he uttered the customary "Ay, ay, sir," with apparent cheerfulness. Nothing more passed between those two worthies, who now parted, Jack to make his arrangements, and Spike to "tell his yarn," as he termed the operation in his own mind, to Mrs. Budd, Rose, and Biddy. The widow listened complacently, though she seemed half doubting, half ready to comply. As for Rose, she received the proposal with delight—the confinement of the vessel having become irksome to her. The principal object was in overcoming the difficulties made by the aunt, Biddy appearing to like the notion quite as much as "Miss Rosy." As for the lighthouse, Mrs. Budd had declared nothing would induce her to go there; for she did not doubt the place would soon be, if

it were not already, haunted. In this opinion she was sustained by Biddy; and it was the knowledge of this opinion that induced Spike to propose the tent.

"Are you sure, Captain Spike, it is not a desert island?" asked the widow; "I remember that my poor Mr. Budd always spoke of desert islands as horrid places, and spots that every one should avoid."

"What if it is, aunty," said Rose, eagerly, "while we have the brig here close at hand? We shall suffer none of the wants of such a place, so long as our friends can supply us."

"And *such* friends, Miss Rose!" exclaimed Spike, a little sentimentally for him; "friends that would undergo hunger and thirst themselves, before you should want for any comforts."

"Do, now, Madam Budd," put in Biddy, in her hearty way. "It's an island, ye'll remimber; and sure that's just what ould Ireland has been, God bless it! Islands make the pleasantest residences."

"Well, I'll venture to oblige you and Biddy, Rosy dear," returned her aunt, still half reluctant to yield, "but you'll remember, that if I find it all a desert island, I'll not pass the night on it on any account whatever."

With this understanding the party was transferred to the shore. The boatswain had already erected a sort of tent on a favorable spot, using some of the old sails that had covered the flour-barrels, not only for the walls, but for a carpet of some extent also. This tent was ingeniously enough contrived. In addition to the little room that was entirely inclosed, there was a sort of piazza, or open veranda, which would enable its tenants to enjoy the shade in the open air. Beneath this veranda a barrel of fresh water was placed, as well as three or four ship's stools, all of which had been sent ashore with the materials for constructing the tent. The boat had been going and coming for some time, and the distance being short, the "desert island" was soon a desert no longer. It is true that the supplies necessary to support three women for as many days were no great matter, and were soon landed, but Jack Tier had made a provision somewhat more ample. A capital caterer, he had forgotten nothing within the compass of his means that could contribute to the comfort of those who had been put especially under his care. Long before the people "knocked off" for their dinners, the arrangements were completed, and the boatswain was ready to take his leave.

"Well, ladies," said the grum old salt, "I can do no more for you, as I can see. This here island is now almost as comfortable as a ship that has been in blue water for a month, and I don't know how it can be made more comfortabler."

This was only according to the boatswain's notion of comfort; but Rose thanked him for his care in her winning way, while her aunt admitted that, "for a place that was almost a desert island, things did look somewhat promising." In a few minutes the men were all gone, and the islet was left to the sole possession of the three females, and their constant companion, Jack Tier. Rose was pleased with the novelty of her situation, though the islet certainly did deserve the opprobrium of being a "desert island." There was no shade but that of the tent, and its veranda-like covering, though the last, in particular, was quite extensive. There was no water, that in the barrel and that of the ocean excepted. Of herbage there was very little on this islet, and that was of the most meager and coarse character, being a long wiry grass, with here and there a few stunted bushes. The sand was reasonably firm, however, more especially round the shore, and the walking was far from unpleasant. Little did Rose know it, but a week earlier the spot would have been next to intolerable to her, on account of the mosquitoes, gallinippers, and other similar insects of the family of tormentors; but everything of the sort had temporarily disappeared in the current of the tornado. To do Spike justice, he was aware of this circumstance, or he might have hesitated about exposing females to the ordinary annoyances of one of these spots. Not a mosquito, or anything of the sort, was left, however, all that having gone to leeward in the vortex which had

come so near sweeping off the Mexican schooner.

"This place will do very well, aunty, for a day or two," cried Rose cheerfully, as she returned from a short excursion, and threw aside her hat, one made to shade her face from the sun of a warm climate, leaving the sea-breeze, that was just beginning to blow, to fan her blooming and sunny cheeks. "It is better than the brig. The worst piece of land is better than the brig."

"Do not say that, Rose—not if it's a desert island, dear; and this is desperately like a desert island; I am almost sorry I ventured on it."

"It will not be deserted by us, aunty, until we shall see occasion to do so. Why not endeavor to get on board of yonder ship, and return to New York in *her;* or at least induce her captain to put us ashore somewhere near this, and go home by land? Your health never seemed better than it is at this moment; and as for mine, I do assure you, aunty dear, I am as perfectly well as I ever was in my life."

"All from this voyage. I knew it would set you up, and am delighted to hear you say as much. Biddy and I were talking of you this very morning, my child, and we both agreed that you *were* getting to be yourself again. Oh, ships, and brigs, and schooners, full-jigger or half-jigger, for pulmonary complaints, say I! My poor Mr. Budd always maintained that the ocean was the cure for all diseases, and I determined that to sea you should go, the moment I became alarmed for your health."

The good widow loved Rose most tenderly, and she was obliged to use her handkerchief to dry the tears from her eyes as she concluded. Those tears sprung equally from a past feeling of apprehension, and a present feeling of gratitude. Rose saw this, and she took a seat at her aunt's side, touched herself, as she never failed to be on similar occasions, with this proof of her relative's affection. At that moment even Harry Mulford would have lost a good deal in her kind feelings toward him, had he so much as smiled at one of the widow's nautical absurdities. At such times, Rose seemed to be her aunt's guardian and protectress, instead of reversing the relations, and she entirely forgot herself the many reasons which existed for wishing that she had been placed in childhood under the care of one better qualified than the well-meaning relict of her uncle for the performance of her duties.

"Thank you, aunty—thank'ee, dear aunty," said Rose, kissing the widow affectionately. "I know that you mean the best for me, though you *are* a little mistaken in supposing me ill. I do assure you, dear," patting her aunt's cheek, as if she herself had been merely a playful child. "I never was better; and if I *have* been pulmonary, I am entirely cured, and am now ready to return home."

"God be praised for this, Rosy. Under *His* divine providence it is all owing to the sea. If you really feel so much restored, however, I do not wish to keep you a moment longer on a ship's board than is necessary. We owe something to Captain Spike's care, and cannot quit him too unceremoniously, but as soon as he is at liberty to go into a harbor I will engage him to do so, and we can return home by land—unless, indeed, the brig intends to make the home voyage herself."

"I do not like the brig, aunty, and now we are out of her, I wish we could keep out of her. Nor do I like your Captain Spike, who seems to me anything but an agreeable gentleman."

"That's because you aren't accustomed to the sea. My poor Mr. Budd had *his* ways, like all the rest of them; it takes time to get acquainted with them. All sailors are so."

Rose bent her face involuntarily, but not so low as to conceal the increasing brightness of her native bloom, as she answered—

"Harry Mulford is not so, aunty dear—and he is every inch a sailor."

"Well, there is a difference, I must acknowledge, though I daresay Harry will grow every day more and more like all the rest of them. In the end he will resemble Captain Spike."

"Never," said Rose, firmly.

"You can't tell, child. I never saw your uncle when he was Harry's age, for I wasn't born till he was thirty, but often and often has he pointed out to me some slender, genteel youth, and say, 'Just such a lad was I at twenty, though nothing could be less alike, at the moment he was speaking, than they two. We all change with our years. Now I was once as slender, and almost—not quite, Rosy, for a few there are that be—but *almost* as handsome as you yourself."

"Yes, aunty, I have heard that before," said Rose, springing up, in order to change the discourse; "but Harry Mulford will never become like Stephen Spike. I wish we had never known the man dearest aunty."

"It was all your own doings, child. He's a cousin of your most intimate friend, and she brought him to the house; and one couldn't offend Mary Mulford, by telling her we didn't like her cousin."

Rose seemed vexed, and she kept her little foot in motion, patting the sail that formed the carpet, as girls will pat the ground with their feet when vexed. This gleam of displeasure was soon over, however, and her countenance became as placid as the clear blue sky that formed the vault of the heavens above her head. As if to atone for the passing rebellion of her feelings, she threw her arms around her aunt's neck; after which she walked away, along the beach, ruminating on her present situation and of the best means of extricating their party from the power of Spike.

It requires great familiarity with vessels and the seas for one to think, read, and pursue the customary train of reasoning on board a ship that one has practiced ashore. Rose had felt this embarrassment during the past month, for the whole of which time she had scarcely been in a condition to act up to her true character, suffering her energies, and in some measure her faculties, to be drawn into the vortex produced by the bustle, novelties, and scenes of the vessel and the ocean. But now she was once more on the land, diminutive and naked as was the islet that composed her present world, and she found leisure and solitude for reflection and decision. She was not ignorant of the nature of a vessel of war, or of the impropriety of unprotected females placing themselves on board of one; but gentlemen of character, like the officers of the ship in sight, could hardly be wanting in the feelings of their caste; and everything was better than to return voluntarily within the power of Spike. She determined within her own mind that voluntarily she would not. We shall leave this young girl, slowly wandering along the beach of her islet, musing on matters like these, while we return to the vessels and the mariners.

A good breeze had come in over the reef from the Gulf, throwing the sloop-of-war dead to leeward of the brigantine's anchorage. This was the reason that the former had closed so slowly. Still the distance between the vessels was so small that a swift cruiser like the ship-of-war would soon have been alongside of the wreckers but for the intervening islets and the intricacies of her channels. She had made sail on the wind, however, and was evidently disposed to come as near to the danger as her lead showed would be safe, even if she did not venture among them.

Spike noted all these movements, and he took his measures accordingly. The pumping and bailing had been going on since the appearance of light, and the flour had been quite half removed from the schooner's hold. That vessel consequently floated with sufficient buoyancy, and no further anxiety was felt on account of her sinking. Still, a great deal of water remained in her, the cabin itself being nearly half full. Spike's object was to reduce this water sufficiently to enable him to descend into the stateroom which Señor Montefalderon had occupied, and bring away the doubloons which alone kept him in the vicinity of so ticklish a neighbor as the *Poughkeepsie*. Escape was easy enough to one who knew the passages of the reef and islets; more especially since the wind had so fortunately brought the cruiser to leeward. Spike

most apprehended a movement upon him in the boats, and he had almost made up his mind, should such an enterprise be attempted, to try his hand in beating it off with his guns. A good deal of uncertainty on the subject of Mulford's consenting to resist the recognized authorities of the country, as well as some doubts of a similar nature in reference to two or three of the best of the foremast hands, alone left him at all in doubt as to the expediency of such a course. As no boats were lowered from the cruiser, however, the necessity of resorting to so desperate a measure did not occur, and the duty of lightening the schooner had proceeded without interruption. As soon as the boatswain came off from the islet, he and the men with him were directed to take the hands and lift the anchors, of which it will be remembered the *Swash* had several down. Even Mulford was shortly after set at work on the same duty; and these expert and ready seamen soon had the brig clear of the ground. As the schooner was anchored, and floated without assistance, the *Swash* rode by her.

Such was the state of things when the men turned-to, after having had their dinners. By this time the sloop-of-war was within half a league of the bay, her progress having been materially retarded by the set of the current, which was directly against her. Spike saw that a collision of some sort or other must speedily occur, and he determined to take the boatswain with him, and descend into the cabin of the schooner in quest of the gold. The boatswain was summoned, and Señor Montefalderon repeated in this man's presence the instructions that he thought it necessary for the adventurers to follow, in order to secure the prize. Knowing how little locks would avail on board a vessel, were the men disposed to rob him, that gentleman had trusted more to secreting his treasure than to securing it in the more ordinary way. When the story had again been told, Spike and his boatswain went on board the schooner, and, undressing, they prepared to descend into the cabin. The captain paused a single instant to take a look at the sloop-of-war, and to examine the state of the weather. It is probable some new impression was made on him by his inquiry, for, hailing Mulford, he ordered him to loosen the sails, and to sheet home, and hoist the fore-topsail. In a word, to "see all ready to cast off, and make sail on the brig at the shortest notice." With this command he disappeared by the schooner's companionway.

Spike and his companion found the water in the cabin much deeper than they had supposed. With a view to comfort, the cabin floor had been sunk much lower than is usual on board American vessels, and this brought the water up nearly to the armpits of two men as short as our captain and his sturdy little boatswain. The former grumbled a good deal, when he ascertained the fact, and said something about the mate's being better fitted to make a search in such a place, but concluding with the remark, that "the man who wants ticklish duty well done must see to it himself."

The gold-hunters groped their way cautiously about the cabin for some time, feeling for a drawer in which they had been told they should find the key of Señor Montefalderon's state-room door. In this Spike himself finally succeeded, he being much better acquainted with cabins and their fixtures than the boatswain.

"Here it is, Ben," said the captain; "now for a dive among the Don's val'ables. Should you pick up anything worth speaking of you can condemn it for salvage, as I mean to cast off and quit the wreck the moment we've made sure of the doubloons."

"And what will become of all the black flour that is lying about, sir?" asked the boatswain, with a grin.

"It may take care of itself. My agreement will be up as soon as the doubloons are found. If the Don will come down handsomely with his share of what will be left I may be brought to put the kegs we have in the brig ashore for him somewhere in Mexico, but my wish is to get out of the neighborhood of that bloody sloop-of-war as soon as possible."

"She makes but slow headway ag'in

the current, sir, but a body would think she might send in her boats."

"The boats might be glad to get back again," muttered Spike. "Ay, here is the door unlocked, and we can now fish for the money."

Some object had rolled against the state-room door, when the vessel was capsized, and there was a good deal of difficulty in forcing it open. They succeeded at last, and Spike led the way by wading into the small apartment. Here they began to feel about beneath the water, and by a very insufficient light, in quest of the hidden treasure. Spike and his boatswain differed as to the place which had just been described to them, as men will differ even in the account of events that pass directly before their eyes. While thus employed the report of a heavy gun came through the doors of the cabin, penetrating to the recess in which they were thus employed.

"Ay, that's the beginning of it!" exclaimed Spike. "I wonder that the fool has put it off so long."

"That gun was a heavy fellow, Captain Spike," returned the boatswain; "and it sounded in my ears as if 'twas shotted."

"Ay, ay, I dare say you're right enough in both opinions. They put such guns on board their sloops-of-war nowadays as a fellow used to find in the lower batteries of a two-decker only in old times; and as for shot, why Uncle Sam pays, and they think it cheaper to fire one out of a gun than to take the trouble of drawing it."

"I believe here's one of the bags, Captain Spike," said the boatswain, making a dip, and coming up with one half of the desired treasure in his fist. "By George, I've grabbed him, sir; and the other bag can't be far off."

"Hand that over to me," said the captain, a little authoritatively, "and take a dive for the next."

As the boatswain was obeying this order a second gun was heard, and Spike thought that the noise made by the near passage of a large shot was audible also. He called out to Ben to "bear a hand, as the ship seems in 'arnest." But the head of the boatswain being under water at the time the admonition was thrown away. The fellow soon came up, however, puffing like a porpoise that has risen to the surface to blow.

"Hand it over to me at once," said Spike, stretching out his unoccupied hand to receive the prize; "we have little time to lose."

"That's sooner said than done, sir," answered the boatswain; "a box has driven down upon the bag, and there's a tight jam. I got hold of the neck of the bag, and pulled like a horse, but it would come nohow."

"Show me the place, and let me have a drag at it. There goes another of his bloody guns!"

Down went Spike, and the length of time he was under water proved how much he was in earnest. Up he came at length, and with no better luck than his companion. He had got hold of the bag, satisfied himself by feeling its outside that it contained the doubloons, and hauled it with all his strength, but it would not come. The boatswain proposed to take a jamming hitch with a rope around the neck of the bag, which was long enough to admit of such a fastening, and then to apply their united force. Spike assented, and the boatswain rummaged about for a piece of small rope to suit this purpose. At this moment Mulford appeared at the companion-way to announce the movements on the part of the sloop-of-war. He had been purposely tardy in order to give the ship as much time as possible; but he saw by the looks of the men that a longer delay might excite suspicion.

"Below there!" called out the mate.

"What's wanting, sir?—what's wanting, sir?" answered Spike; "let's know at once."

"Have you heard the guns, Captain Spike?"

"Ay, ay, every grumbler of them. They've done no mischief, I trust, Mr. Mulford?"

"None as yet, sir; though the last shot, and it was a heavy fellow, passed just above the schooner's deck. I've the top-sail sheeted home and hoisted, and

it's that which has set them at work. If I clewed up again, I daresay they'd not fire another gun."

"Clew up nothing, sir, but see all clear for casting off and making sail through the South Pass. What do you say, Ben, are you ready for a drag?"

"All ready, sir," answered the boatswain, once more coming up to breathe. "Now for it, sir; a steady pull, and a pull all together." They *did* pull, but the hitch slipped, and both went down beneath the water. In a moment they were up again, puffing a little and swearing a great deal. Just then another gun, and a clatter above their heads, brought them to a stand.

"What means that, Mr. Mulford?" demanded Spike, a good deal startled.

"It means that the sloop-of-war has shot away the head of the schooner's foremast, sir, and that the shot has chipped a small piece out of the heel of our main-topmast—that's all."

Though excessively provoked at the mate's cool manner of replying, Spike saw that he might lose all by being too tenacious about securing the remainder of the doubloons. Pronouncing in very energetic terms on Uncle Sam, and all his cruisers, an anathema that we do not care to repeat, he gave a surly order to Ben to "knock off," and abandoned his last design. In a minute he was on deck and dressed.

"Cast off, lads," cried the captain, as soon as on the deck of his own brig again, "and four of you man that boat. We have got half of your treasure, Señor Wan, but have been driven from the rest of it, as you see. There is the bag; when at leisure we'll divide it, and give the people their share. Mr. Mulford, keep the brig in motion, hauling up toward the South Pass, while I go ashore for the ladies. I'll meet you just in the throat of the passage."

This said, Spike tumbled into his boat and was pulled ashore. As for Mulford, though he cast many an anxious glance toward the islet, he obeyed his orders, keeping the brig standing off and on, under easy canvas, but working her up toward the indicated passage.

Spike was met by Jack Tier on the beach of the little island.

"Muster the women at once," ordered the captain, "we have no time to lose, for that fellow will soon be firing broadsides, and his shot now range half a mile beyond us."

"You'll no more move the widow and her maid, then you'll move the island," answered Jack, laconically.

"Why should I not move them? Do they wish to stay here and starve?"

"It's little they think of *that*. The sloop-of-war no sooner began to fire than down went Mrs. Budd on the canvas floor of the tent, and set up just such a screaming as you may remember she tried her hand at the night the revenue craft fired into us. Biddy lay down alongside of her mistress, and at every gun they just screamed as loud as they can, as if they fancied they might frighten off Uncle Sam's men from their duty."

"Duty!—You little scamp, do you call tormenting honest traders in this fashion the duty of any man?"

"Well, captain, I'm no ways particular about a word or two. Their 'ways,' if you like that better than duty, sir."

"Where's Rose? Is she down too, screaming and squalling?"

"No, Captain Spike, no. Miss Rose is endeavoring like a handsome young Christian lady as she is, to pacify and mollify her aunt and Biddy; and right down sensible talk does she give them."

"Then she at least can go aboard the brig," exclaimed Spike, with a sudden animation and an expression of countenance that Jack did not at all like.

"I *ray-y-ther* think she'll wish to hold on to the old lady," observed the steward's mate, a little emphatically.

"You be d—d," cried Spike, fiercely; "when your opinion is wanted, I'll ask for it. If I find you've been setting that young woman's mind ag'in me, I'll toss you overboard, as I would the offals of a shark."

"Young women's minds, when they are only nineteen, get set ag'in boys of fifty-six without much assistance."

"Fifty-six yourself."

"I'm fifty-three—that I'll own without making faces at it," returned Jack, meekly; "and, Stephen Spike, you logged fifty-six your last birthday, or a false entry was made."

This conversation did not take place in the presence of the boat's crew, but as the two walked together toward the tent. They were now in the veranda, as we have called the shaded opening in front, and actually within the sound of the sweet voice of Rose, as she exhorted her aunt, in tones a little louder than usual for her to use, to manifest more fortitude. Under such circumstances Spike did not deem it expedient to utter that which was uppermost in his mind, but, turning short upon Tier, he directed a tremendous blow directly between his eyes. Jack saw the danger and dodged, falling backward to avoid a concussion which he knew would otherwise be fearful, coming as it would from one of the best forecastle boxers of his time. The full force of the blow *was* avoided, though Jack got enough of it to knock him down, and to give him a pair of black eyes. Spike did not stop to pick the assistant steward up, for another gun was fired at that very instant, and Mrs. Budd and Biddy renewed their screams. Instead of pausing to kick the prostrate Tier, as had just before been his intention, the captain entered the tent.

A scene that was sufficiently absurd met the view of Spike, when he found himself in the presence of the females. The widow had thrown herself on the ground, and was grasping the cloth of the sail on which the tent had been erected with both her hands, and was screaming at the top of her voice. Biddy's imitation was not exactly literal, for she had taken a comfortable seat at the side of her mistress, but in the way of cries, she rather outbid her principal.

"We must be off," cried Spike, somewhat unceremoniously. "The man-of-war is blazing away, as if she was a firin' minute-guns over our destruction, and I can wait no longer."

"I'll not stir," answered the widow—"I can't stir—I shall be shot if I go out. No, no, no—I'll not stir an inch."

"We'll be kilt! — we'll be kilt!" echoed Biddy, "and a wicket murther 'twill be in that same man, war or no war."

The captain perceived the uselessness of remonstrance at such a moment, and perhaps he was secretly rejoiced thereat; but it is certain that he whipped Rose up under his arm, and walked away with her, as if she had been a child of two or three years of age. Rose did not scream, but she struggled and protested vehemently. It was in vain. Already the captain had carried her half the distance between the tent and the boat, in the last of which, a minute more would have deposited his victim, when a severe blow on the back of his head caused Spike to stumble, and permitted Rose to escape from his grasp, in the effort to save himself from a fall. Turning fiercely toward his assailant, whom he suspected to be one of his boat's crew, he saw Tier standing within a few yards, leveling a pistol at him.

"Advance a step and you're a dead man, villain!" screamed Jack, his voice almost cracked with rage, and the effort he made to menace.

Spike muttered an oath too revolting for our pages; but it was such a curse as none but an old salt could give vent to, and that in the bitterness of his fiercest wrath. At that critical moment, while Rose was swelling with indignation and wounded maiden pride, almost within reach of his arms, looking more lovely than ever, as the flush of anger deepened the color on her cheeks, a fresh and deep report from one of the guns of the sloop-of-war drew all eyes in her direction. The belching of that gun seemed to be of double the power of those which had preceded it, and jets of water, that were twenty feet in height, marked the course of the formidable missile that was projected from the piece. The ship had, indeed, discharged one of those monster cannons that bear the name of a distinguished French engineer, but which should more properly be called by the name of

——and he permitted Rose to escape from his grasp in the effort to save himself from a fall. Turning fiercely towards the assailant, he saw Tier standing within a few yards, leveling a pistol at him.—*Jack Tier.*

the ingenious officer who is at the head of our own ordnance, as they came originally from his inventive faculties, though somewhat improved by their European adopter. Spike suspected the truth, for he had heard of these "Pazans," as he called them, and he watched the booming, leaping progress of the eight-inch shell that this gun threw, with the apprehension that unknown danger is apt to excite. As jet succeeded jet, each rising nearer and nearer to his brig, the interval of time between them seeming fearfully to diminish, he muttered oath upon oath. The last leap that the shell made on the water was at about a quarter of a mile's distance of the islet on which his people had deposited at least a hundred and fifty barrels of spurious flour; thence it flew, as it might be without an effort, with a grand and stately bound into the very center of the barrels, exploding at the moment it struck. All saw the scattering of flour, which was instantly succeeded by the heavy though slightly straggling explosion of all the powder on the island. A hundred kegs were lighted, as it might be, in a common flash, and a cloud of white smoke poured out and concealed the whole islet and all near it.

Rose stood confounded, nor was Jack Tier in a much better state of mind, though he still kept the pistol leveled, and menaced Spike. But the last was no longer dangerous to any there. He recollected that piles of the barrels encumbered the decks of his vessel, and he rushed to the boat, nearly frantic with haste, ordering the men to pull for their lives. In less than five minutes he was alongside, and on the deck of the *Swash*—his first order being, "Tumble every barrel of this bloody powder into the sea, men. Over with it, Mr. Mulford, clear away the midship ports, and launch as much as you can through them."

Remonstrance on the part of Señor Montefalderon would have been useless, had he been disposed to make it; but sooth to say, he was as ready to get rid of the powder as any there, after the specimen he had just witnessed of the power of a Paixhan gun.

Thus it is ever with men. Had two or three of those shells been first thrown without effect, as might very well have happened under the circumstances, none there would have cared for the risk they were running; but the chance explosion which had occurred, presented so vivid a picture of the danger, dormant and remote as it really was, as to throw the entire crew of the *Swash* into a frenzy of exertion.

Nor was the vessel at all free from danger. On the contrary, she ran very serious risk of being destroyed, and in some degree, in the very manner apprehended. Perceiving that Spike was luffing up through one of the passages nearest the reef, which would carry him clear of the group, a long distance to windward of the point where he could only effect the same object, the commander of the sloop-of-war opened his fire in good earnest, hoping to shoot away something material on board the *Swash*, before she could get beyond the reach of his shot. The courses steered by the two vessels, just at that moment, favored such an attempt, though they made it necessarily very short-lived. While the *Swash* was near the wind, the sloop-of-war was obliged to run off to avoid islets ahead of her, a circumstance which, while it brought the brig square with the ship's broadside, compelled the latter to steer on a diverging line to the course of her chase. It was in consequence of these facts that the sloop-of-war now opened in earnest, and was soon canopied in the smoke of her own fire.

Great and important changes, as has been already mentioned, have been made in the armaments of all the smaller cruisers within the last few years. Half a generation since, a ship of the rate—we do not say of the *size*—of the vessel which was in the chase of Spike and his craft, would not have had it in her power to molest an enemy at the distance these two vessels were now apart. But recent improvements have made ships of this nominal force formidable at nearly a league's distance; more especially by means of their Paixhans and their shells.

For some little time the range carried the shot directly over the islet of the tent;

Jack Tier and Rose, both of whom were watching all that passed with intense interest, standing in the open air the whole time, seemingly with no concern for themselves, so absorbed was each, notwithstanding all that had passed, in the safety of the brig. As for Rose, she thought only of Harry Mulford, and of the danger he was in by those fearful explosions of the shells. Her quick intellect comprehended the peculiar nature of the risk that was incurred by having the flour-barrels on deck, and she could not but see the manner in which Spike and his men were tumbling them into the water, as the quickest manner of getting rid of them: After what had just passed between Jack Tier and his commander, it might not be so easy to account for his manifest, nay, intense interest in the escape of the *Swash*. This was apparent by his troubled countenance, by his exclamations, and occasionally by his openly expressed wishes for her safety. Perhaps it was no more than the interest the seaman is so apt to feel in the craft in which he has so long sailed, and which to him has been a home, and of which Mulford exhibited so much, in his struggles between feeling and conscience —between a true and a false duty.

As for Spike and his people, we have already mentioned their efforts to get rid of the powder. Shell after shell exploded, though none very near the brig, the ship working her guns as if in action. At length the officers of the sloop-of-war detected a source of error in their aim that is of very common occurrence in sea-gunnery. Their shot had been thrown to *ricochet*, quartering a low but very regular succession of little waves. Each shot striking the water at an acute angle to its agitated surface was deflected from a straight line, and described a regular curve toward the end of its career; or, it might be truer to say, an *irregular* curvature, for the deflection increased as the momentum of the missile diminished.

No sooner did the commanding officer of the sloop-of-war discover this fact—and it was easy to trace the course of the shots by the jets of water they cast into the air, and to see as well as to hear the explosions of the shells—than he ordered the guns pointed more to windward, as a means of counteracting the departure from the straight lines. This expedient succeeded in part, the solid shot falling much nearer to the brig the moment the practice was resorted to. No shell was fired for some little time after the new order was issued, and Spike and his people began to hope these terrific missiles had ceased their annoyance. The men cheered, finding their voices for the first time since the danger had seemed so imminent, and Spike was heard animating them to their duty. As for Mulford, he was on the coach-house deck, working the brig, the captain having confided to him that delicate duty, the highest proof he could furnish of confidence in his seamanship. The handsome young mate had just made a half-board, in the neatest manner, shoving the brig by its means through a most difficult part of the passage, and had got her handsomely filled again on the same tack, looking right out into open water, by a channel through which she could now stand on a very easy bowline. Everything seemed propitious, and the sloop-of-war's solid shot began to drop into the water, a hundred yards short of the brig. In this state of things one of the Paixhans belched forth its angry flame and sullen roar again. There was no mistaking the gun. Then came its mass of iron, a globe that would have weighed just sixty-eight pounds, had not sufficient metal been left out of its interior to leave a cavity to contain a single pound of powder. Its course, as usual, was to to be marked by its path along the sea, as it bounded, half a mile at a time, from wave to wave. Spike saw by its undeviating course that this shell was booming terrifically toward his brig, and a cry to "look out for the shell," caused the work to be suspended. That shell struck the water for the last time within two hundred yards of the brig, rose dark and menacing in its furious leap, but exploded at the next instant. The fragments of the iron were scattered on each side and ahead. Of the last, three or four fell into

the water so near the vessel as to cast their spray on her decks.

"Overboard with the rest of the powder!" shouted Spike. "Keep the brig off a little, Mr. Mulford—keep her off, sir; you luff too much, sir."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the mate. "Keep her off, it is."

"There comes the other shell!" cried Ben, but the men did not quit their toil to gaze this time. Each seaman worked as if life and death depended on his single exertions. Spike alone watched the course of the missile. On it came, booming and hurtling through the air, tossing high the jets, at each leap it made from the surface, striking the water for its last bound, seemingly in a line with the shell that had just preceded it. From that spot it made its final leap. Every hand in the brig was stayed and every eye was raised as the rushing tempest was heard advancing. The mass went mutttering directly between the masts of the *Swash*. It had scarcely seemed to go by when the fierce flash of fire and the sharp explosion followed. Happily for those in the brig, the projectile force given by the gun carried the fragments from them, as in the other instance it had brought them forward; else would few have escaped mutilation, or death, among their crew.

The flashing of the fire so near the barrels of powder that still remained on their deck, caused the frantic efforts to be renewed, and barrel after barrel was tumbled overboard amid the shouts that were now raised to animate the people to their duty.

"Luff, Mr. Mulford—luff, you may, sir," cried Spike.

No answer was given.

"D'ye hear there, Mr. Mulford?—it is luff you may, sir."

"Mr. Mulford is not aft, sir," called out the man at the helm—"but luff it is, sir."

"Mr. Mulford is not aft! Where's the mate, man? Tell him he is wanted."

No Mulford was to be found. A call passed round the decks, was sent below, and echoed throughout the entire brig, but no sign or tidings could be had of the handsome mate. At that exciting moment the sloop-of-war seemed to cease her firing and appeared to be securing her guns.

CHAPTER VII.

"Thou art the same, eternal sea!
The earth has many shapes and forms,
Of hill and valley, flower and tree;
Fields that the fervid noontide warms,
Or winter's rugged grasp deforms,
Or bright with autumn's golden store:
Thou coverest up thy face with storms,
Or smilest serene—but still thy roar
And dashing foam go up to vex the sea-beat shore."
—LUNT.

WE shall now advance the time eight-and-forty hours. The baffling winds and calms that succeeded the tornado had gone, and the trades blew in their stead. Both vessels had disappeared, the brig leading, doubling the western extremity of the reef, and going off before both wind and current with flowing sheets fully three hours before the sloop-of-war could beat up against the latter, to a point that enabled her to do the same thing. By that time, the *Swash* was five-and-twenty miles to the eastward, and consequently but just discernible in her loftiest sails from the ship's royal yards. Still, the latter continued the chase, and that evening both vessels were beating down along the southern margin of the Florida Reef, against the trades, but favored by a three or four knot current, the brig out of sight to windward.

Our narrative leads us to lose sight of both these vessels, for a time, in order to return to the islets of the Gulf. Eight-and-forty hours had made some changes in and around the haven of the Dry Tortugas. The tent still stood, and a small fire that was boiling its pot and its kettle, at no great distance from it, proved that the tent was still inhabited. The schooner also rode at her anchors, very much as she had been abandoned by Spike. The bag of doubloons, however, had been found, and there it lay, tied, but totally unguarded, in the canvas veranda of Rose Budd's habitation. Jack Tier

passed and repassed it with apparent indifference, as he went to and fro between his pantry and kitchen, busy as a bee in preparing his noontide meal for the day. This man seemed to have the islet all to himself, however, no one else being visible on any part of it. He sung his song in a cracked *contralto* voice, and appeared to be happy in his solitude. Occasionally he talked to himself aloud, most probably because he had no one else to speak to. We shall record one of his recitatives, which came in between the strains of a very inharmonious air, the words of which treated of the seas, while the steward's assistant was stirring an exceedingly savory mess that he had concocted of the ingredients to be found in the united larders of the *Swash* and the Mexican schooner.

"Stephen Spike is a capital willian!" exclaimed Jack, smelling at a ladle filled with his soup—"a capital willian, I call him. To think, at his time of life, of such a handsome and pleasant young thing as this Rose Budd; and then to try to get her by underhand means, and by making a fool of her silly old aunt. It's wonderful what fools some old aunts be! Quite wonderful! If I was as great a simpleton as this Mrs. Budd, I'd never cross my threshold. Yes, Stephen Spike is a prodigious willian, as his best friends must own! Well, I gave him a thump on the head that he'll not forget this v'y'ge. To think of carryin' off that pretty Rose Budd in his very arms, in so indecent a manner! Yet, the man has his good p'ints, if a body could only forget his bad ones. He's a first-rate seaman. How he worked the brig till he doubled the reef, a'ter she got into open water; and how he made her walk off afore the wind, with stun'sails alow and aloft, as soon as ever he could make 'em draw! My life for it, he'll tire the legs of Uncle Sam's man, afore he can fetch up with him. For running away, when hard chased, Stephen Spike hasn't his equal on 'arth. But he's a great willian—a prodigious willian! I cannot say I actually wish him hanged; but I would rather have him hanged than see him get pretty Rose in his power. What has he to do with girls of nineteen? If the rascal is one year old, he's fifty-six. I hope the sloop-of-war will find her match, and I think she will. The *Molly's* a great traveler, and not to be outdone easily. 'Twould be a thousand pities so lovely a craft should be cut off in the flower of her days, as it might be, and I *do* hope she'll lead that bloody sloop on some sunken rock.

"Well, there's the other bag of dubloons. It seems Stephen could not get it. That's odd, too, for he's great at grabbin' gold. The man bears his age well; but he's a willian! I wonder whether he or Mulford made that half-board in the narrow channel. It was well done, and Stephen is a perfect sailor; but he says Mulford is the same. Nice young man, that Mulford; just fit for Rose, and Rose for him. Pity to part them. Can find no great fault with him, except that he has too much conscience. There's such as having too much, as well as too little conscience. Mulford has too much, and Spike has too little. For him to think of carryin' off a gal of nineteen! I say he's fifty-six, if he's a day. How fond he used to be of this very soup! If I've seen him eat a quart of it, I've seen him eat a puncheonful of it, in my time. What an appetite the man has when he's had a hard day's duty on't! There's a great deal to admire, and a geat deal to like in Stephen Spike, but he's a reg'lar willian. I dare say he fancies himself a smart, jaunty youth ag'in as I can remember him; a lad of twenty, which was about his years when I first saw him, by the sign that I was very little turned of fifteen myself. Spike *was* comely then, though I acknowledge he's a willian. I can see him now, with his deep blue roundabout, his bell-mouthed trousers, both fine cloth—too fine for such a willian—but fine it was, and much did it become him."

Here Jack made a long pause, during which, though he may have thought much, he said nothing. Nevertheless, he wasn't idle the while. On the contrary, he passed no less than three several times from the fire to the tent, and returned. Each time, in going and coming, he looked

intently at the bag of doubloons, though he did not stop at it or touch it. Some associations connected with Spike's fruitless attempts to obtain it must have formed its principal interest with this singular being, as he muttered his captain's name in passing, though he said no more audibly. The concerns of the dinner carried him back and forth; and in his last visit to the tent, he began to set a small table—one that had been brought for the convenience of Mrs. Budd and her niece, from the brig, and which of course still remained on the islet. It was while thus occupied, that Jack Tier recommenced his soliloquy.

"I hope that money may do some worthy fellow good yet. It's Mexican gold, and that's inemy's gold, and might be condemned by law, I do suppose. Stephen had a hankerin' a'ter it, but he did not get it. It come easy enough to the next man that tried. That Spike's a willian, and the gold was too good for him. He has no conscience at all to think of a gal of nineteen! and one fit for his betters, in the bargain. The time *has* been when Stephen Spike might have pretended to Rose Budd's equal. That much I'll ever maintain, but that time is gone; and, what is more, it will never come again. I should like Mulford better if he had a little less conscience. Conscience may do for Uncle Sam's ships, but it is sometimes in the way aboard a trading craft. What can a fellow do with a conscience when dollars is to be smuggled off, or tobacco smuggled ashore? I do suppose I've about as much conscience as it is useful to have, and I've got ashore in my day twenty thousand dollars' worth of stuff, of one sort or another, if I've got ashore the valie of ten dollars. But Spike carries on business on too large a scale, and many's the time I've told him so. I could have forgiven him anything but this attempt on Rose Budd; and he's altogether too old for that, to say nothing of other people's rights. He's an up-and-down willian, and a body can make no more, nor any less of him. That soup must be near done, and I'll hoist the signal for grub."

This signal was a blue-peter, of which one had been brought ashore to signal the brig; and with which Jack now signaled the schooner. If the reader will turn his eyes toward the last-named vessel, he will find the guests whom Tier expected to surround his table. Rose, her aunt and Biddy were all seated, under an awning made by a sail, on the deck of the schooner, which now floated so buoyantly as to show that she had materially lightened since last seen. Such indeed was the fact, and he who had been the instrument of producing this change, appeared on deck in the person of Mulford, as soon as he was told that the blue-peter of Jack Tier was flying.

The boat of the lighthouse, that in which Spike had landed in quest of Rose, was laying alongside of the schooner, and sufficiently explained the manner in which the mate had left the brig. This boat, in fact, had been fastened astern, in the hurry of getting from under the sloop-of-war's fire, and Mulford had taken the opportunity of the consternation and frantic efforts produced by the explosion of the last shell thrown, to descend from his station on the coach-house in this boat, to cut the painter, and to let the *Swash* glide away from him. This the vessel had done with great rapidity, leaving him unseen under the cover of her stern. As soon as in the boat, the mate had seized an oar, and sculled to an islet that was within fifty yards, concealing the boat behind a low hummock that formed a tiny bay. All this was done so rapidly, that, united to the confusion on board the *Swash*, no one discovered the mate or the boat. Had he been seen, however, it is very little probable that Spike would have lost a moment of time, in the attempt to recover either. But he was not seen, and it was the general opinion on board the *Swash*, for quite an hour, that her handsome mate had been knocked overboard and killed by a fragment of the shell that had seemed to explode almost in the ears of her people. When the reef was doubled, however, and Spike made his preparations for meeting the rough water, he hove to, and ordered his own yawl,

him by an appellation so kind and familiar—a thing she had never done previously to the intercourse which had been the consequence of their present situation. "Though I agree with Rose in thinking an eddy may be a good or a bad thing, and very much like a tide, as one wishes to steer."

"You amaze me, both of you! Tides are always spoken of favorably, but eddies never. If a ship gets ashore, the tide can float her off; *that* I've heard a thousand times. Then, what do the newspapers say of President ——, and Governor ——, and Congressman ——? * Why, that they all 'float in the tide of public opinion,' and that must mean something particularly good, as they are always in office. No, no, Harry. I'll acknowledge that you do know something about ships; a good deal, considering how young you are; but you have something to learn about eddies. Never trust one as long as you live."

Mulford was silent, and Rose took the occasion to change the discourse.

"I hope we shall soon be able to quit this place," she said; "for I confess to some dread of Captain Spike's return."

"Captain Stephen Spike has greatly disappointed me," observed the aunt, gravely. "I do not know that I was ever before deceived in judging a person. I could have sworn he was an honest, frank, well-meaning sailor—a character, of all others, that I love; but it has turned out otherwise."

"He's a villain!" muttered Jack Tier.

Mulford smiled; at which speech we must leave to conjecture; but he answered Rose, as he ever did, promptly and with pleasure.

"The schooner is ready, and this must be our last meal ashore," he said. "Our outfit will be no great matter, but if it will carry us down to Key West, I shall ask no more of it. As for the return of the *Swash*, I look upon it as certain. She could easily get clear of the sloop-of-war, with the start she had, and Spike is a man that never yet abandoned a doubloon when he knew where one was to be found."

"Stephen Spike is like all his fellow-creatures," put in Jack Tier, pointedly. "He has his faults, and he has his virtues."

"Virtue is a term I should never think of applying to such a man," returned Mulford, a little surprised at the fellow's earnestness. "The word is a big one, and belongs to quite another class of persons." Jack muttered a few syllables that were unintelligible, when again the conversation changed.

Rose now inquired of Mulford as to their prospects of getting to Key West. He told her that the distance was about sixty miles, their route lying along the north or inner side of the Florida Reef. The whole distance was to be made against the trade-wind, which was then blowing about an eight-knot breeze, though, bating eddies, they might expect to be favored with the current, which was less strong inside than outside of the reef. As for handling the schooner, Mulford saw no great difficulty in that. She was not large, and was both lightly sparred and lightly rigged. All her top-hamper had been taken down by Spike, and nothing remained but the plainest and most readily-managed gear. A fore-and-aft vessel, sailing close by the wind, is not difficult to steer; will almost steer herself, indeed, in smooth water. Jack Tier could take his trick at the helm, in any weather, even in running before the wind, the time when it is most difficult to guide a craft; and Rose might be made to understand the use of the tiller, and taught to govern the motions of a vessel so small and so simply rigged, when on a wind and in smooth water. On the score of managing the schooner, therefore, Mulford thought there would be little cause for apprehension. Should the weather continue settled, he had little doubt of safely landing the whole party at Key West, in the course of the next four-and-twenty hours. Short sail he should be obliged to carry, as well on account of the greater facility of managing it, as on account of the circumstance

* We suppress the names used by Mrs. Budd, out of delicacy to the individuals mentioned, who are still living.

that the schooner was now in light ballast trim, and would not bear much canvas. He thought that the sooner they left the islets the better, as it would not be long ere the brig would be seen hovering around the spot.

All these matters were discussed as the party still sat at table; and when they left it, which was a few minutes later, it was to remove the effects they intended to carry away to the boat. This was soon done, both Jack Tier and Biddy proving very serviceable, while Rose tripped backward and forward, with a step elastic as a gazelle's, carrying light burdens. In half an hour the boat was ready. "Here lies the bag of doubloons still," said Mulford, smiling. "Is it to be left, or shall we give it up to the admiralty court at Key West, and put in a claim for salvage?"

"Better leave it for Spike," said Jack, unexpectedly. "Should he come back, and find the doubloons, he may be satisfied, and not look for the schooner. On the other hand, when the vessel is missing, he will think that the money is in her. Better leave it for old Stephen."

"I do not agree with you, Tier," said Rose, though she looked as amicably at the steward's assistant, while she thus opposed his opinion, as if anxious to persuade rather than coerce. "I do not quite agree with you. This money belongs to the Spanish merchant; and, as we take away with us his vessel, to give it up to the authorities at Key West, I do not think we have a right to put his gold on the shore and abandon it."

This disposed of the question. Mulford took the bag, and carried it to the boat, without waiting to ascertain if Jack had any objection; while the whole party followed. In a few minutes everybody and everything in the boat was transferred to the deck of the schooner. As for the tent, the old sails of which it was made, the furniture it contained, and such articles of provisions as were not wanted, they were left on the islet without regard. The schooner had several casks of fresh water, which were found in her hold, and she had also a cask or two of salted meats, besides several articles of food more delicate, that had been provided by Señor Montefalderon for his own use, and which had not been damaged by the water. A keg of Boston crackers were among these eatables, quite half of which were still in a state to be eaten. They were Biddy's delight, and it was seldom that she could be seen when not nibbling at one of them. The bread of the crew was hopelessly damaged; but Jack had made an ample provision when sent ashore, and there were still a hundred barrels of the flour in the schooner's hold. One of these had been hoisted on deck by Mulford, and opened. The injured flour was easily removed, leaving a considerable quantity fit for the uses of the kitchen. As for the keg of gunpowder, it was incontinently committed to the deep.

Thus provided for, Mulford decided that the time had arrived when he ought to quit his anchorage. He had been employed most of that morning in getting up the schooner's anchor, a work of great toil to him, though everybody had assisted. He had succeeded, and the vessel now rode by a kedge, that he could easily weigh by means of a deck tackle. It remained now, therefore, to lift this kedge and to stand out of the bay of the islets. No sooner was the boat secured astern and its freight disposed of than the mate began to make sail. In order to hoist the mainsail well up he was obliged to carry the halyards to the windlass. Thus aided, he succeeded without much difficulty. He and Jack Tier and Biddy got the jib hoisted by hand; and as for the foresail, that would almost set itself. Of course, it was not touched until the kedge was aweigh. Mulford found little difficulty in lifting the last, and he soon had the satisfaction of finding his craft clear of the ground. As Jack Tier was every way competent to take charge of the forecastle, Mulford now sprung aft and took his own station at the helm, Rose acting as his pretty assistant on the quarter-deck.

There is little mystery in getting a fore-and-aft vessel under way. Her sails fill almost as a matter of course, and motion follows as a necessary law. Thus did it

prove with the Mexican schooner, which turned out to be a fast-sailing and an easily-worked craft. She was, indeed, an American bottom, as it is termed, having been originally built for the Chesapeake; and, though not absolutely what is understood by a Baltimore clipper, so nearly of that mold and nature as to possess some of the more essential qualities. As usually happens, however, when a foreigner gets hold of an American schooner, the Mexicans had shortened her mast and lessened her canvas. This circumstance was rather an advantage to Mulford, who would probably have had more to attend to than he wished under the original rig of the craft.

Everybody, even to the fastidious Mrs. Budd, was delighted with the easy and swift movement of the schooner. Mulford, now he had got her under canvas, handled her without any difficulty, letting her stand toward the channel through which he intended to pass with her sheets just taken in, though compelled to keep a little off, in order to enter between the islets. No difficulty occurred, however, and in less than ten minutes the vessel was clear of the channels and in open water. The sheets were now flattened in and the schooner brought close by the wind. A trial of the vessel on this mode of sailing was no sooner made than Mulford was induced to regret he had taken so many precautions against any increasing power of the wind. To meet emergencies, and under the notion that he should have his craft more under command, the young man had reefed his mainsail and taken the bonnets off the foresail and jib. As the schooner stood up better than he had anticipated, the mate felt as all seamen are so apt to feel when they see that their vessels might be made to perform more than is actually got out of them. As the breeze was fresh, however, he determined not to let out the reef; and the labor of lacing on the bonnets again was too great to be thought of just at that moment.

We all find relief on getting in motion, when pressed by circumstances. Mulford had been in great apprehension of the reappearance of the *Swash* all that day; for it was about the time when Spike would be apt to return, in the event of his escaping from the sloop-of-war, and he dreaded Rose's again falling into the hands of a man so desperate. Nor is it imputing more than a very natural care to the young man, to say that he had some misgivings concerning himself. Spike, by this time, must be convinced that his business in the Gulf was known; and one who had openly thrown off his service, as his mate had done, would unquestionably be regarded as a traitor to *his* interests, whatever might be the relation in which he would stand to the laws of the country. It was probable such an alleged offender would not be allowed to appear before the tribunals of the land, to justify himself and to accuse the truly guilty, if it were in the power of the last to prevent it. Great, therefore, was the satisfaction of our handsome young mate when he found himself again fairly in motion, with a craft under him that glided ahead in a way to prove that she might give even the *Swash* some trouble to catch her, in the event of a trial of speed.

Everybody entered into the feelings of Mulford, as the schooner passed gallantly out from between the islets and entered the open water. Fathom by fathom did her wake rapidly increase, until it could no longer be traced back as far as the sandy beaches that had just been left. In a quarter of an hour more, the vessel had drawn so far from the land, that some of the smaller and lowest of the islets were getting to be indistinct. At that instant everybody had come aft, the females taking their seats on the trunk, which, in this vessel as in the *Swash* herself, gave space and height to the cabin.

"Well," exclaimed Mrs. Budd, who found the freshness of the sea air invigorating, as well as their speed exciting, "this is what I call maritime, Rosy dear. This is what is meant by the maritime states, about which we read so much, and which are commonly thought to be so important. We are now in a maritime state, and I feel perfectly happy after all our dangers and adventures!"

"Yes, aunty, and I am delighted that you *are* happy," answered Rose, with frank affection. "We are now rid of that infamous Spike, and may hope never to see his face more."

"Stephen Spike has his good p'ints as well as another," said Jack Tier, abruptly.

"I know that he is an old shipmate of yours, Tier, and that you cannot forget how he once stood connected with you, and am sorry I have said so much against him," answered Rose, expressing her concern even more by her looks and tones than by her words.

Jack was mollified by this, and he let his feeling be seen, though he said no more than to mutter, "He's a willian!" words that had frequently issued from his lips within the last day or two."

"Stephen Spike is a capital seaman, and that is something in any man," observed the relict of Captain Budd. "He learned his trade from one who was every way qualified to teach him, and it's no wonder he should be expert. Do you expect, Mr. Mulford, to beat the wind the whole distance to Key West?"

It was not possible for any one to look more grave than the mate did habitually, while the widow was floundering through her sea-terms. Rose had taught him that respect for her aunt was to be one of the conditions of her own regard, though Rose had never opened her lips to him on the subject.

"Yes, ma'am," answered the mate, respectfully, "we are in the trades, and shall have to turn to windward, every inch of the way to Key West."

"Of what lock is this place the key, Rosy?" asked the aunt, innocently enough. "I know that forts and towns are sometimes called keys, but they always have locks of some sort or other. Now, Gibraltar is the key of the Mediterranean, as your uncle has told me fifty times; and I have been there, and can understand why it should be—but I do not know of what lock this West is the key."

"It is not that sort of key which is meant, aunty, at all, but quite a different thing. The key meant is an island."

"And why should any one be so silly as to call an island a key?"

"The place where vessels unload is sometimes called a key," answered Mulford; "the French called it a *quai*, and the Dutch *kaye*. I suppose our English word is derived from these. Now, a low, sandy island looking somewhat like keys, or wharves, seamen have given them this name. Key West is merely a low island."

"Then there is no lock to it, or anything to be unfastened," said the widow, in her most simple manner.

"It may turn out to be the key of the Gulf of Mexico, one of these days, ma'am. Uncle Sam is surveying the reef, and intends to do something here, I believe. When Uncle Sam is really in earnest, he is capable of performing great things."

Mrs. Budd was satisfied with this explanation, though she told Biddy that evening, that "locks and keys go together, and that the person who christened the island to which they were going must have been very weak in his upper story." But these reflections on the intellects of her fellow-creatures were by no means uncommon with the worthy relict; and we cannot say that her remarks made any particular impression on her Irish maid.

In the meantime, the Mexican schooner behaved quite to Mulford's satisfaction. He thought her a little tender in the squalls, of which they had several that afternoon; but he remarked to Rose, who expressed her uneasiness at the manner in which the vessel lay over in one of them, that "she comes down quite easy to her bearings, but it is hard forcing her beyond them. The vessel needs more cargo to ballast her, though, on the whole, I find her as stiff as one could expect. I am now glad that I reefed, and reduced the head sails, though I was sorry at having done so when we first came out. At this rate of sailing, we ought to be up with Key West by morning."

But that rate of sailing did not continue. Toward evening the breeze lessened almost to a calm again, the late tornado appearing to have quite deranged the ordinary stability of the trades.

When the sun set, and it went down into the broad waters of the Gulf a flood of flame, there was barely a two-knot breeze, and Mulford had no longer any anxiety on the subject of keeping his vessel on her legs. His solicitude now was confined to the probability of falling in with the *Swash*. As yet, nothing was visible, either in the shape of land or in that of a sail. Between the islets of the Dry Tortugas and the next nearest visible keys, there is a space of open water, of some forty miles in width. The reef extends across it, of course; but nowhere does the rock protrude itself above the surface of the sea. The depth of water on this reef varies essentially. In some places a ship of large size might pass on to it, if not across it; while in others a man could wade for miles. There is one deep and safe channel—safe to those who are acquainted with it—through the center of this open space, and which is sometimes used by vessels that wish to pass from one side to the other; but it is ever better for those whose business does not call them in that direction to give to rocks a good berth, more especially in the night.

Mulford had gleamed many of the leading facts connected with the channels, and the navigation of these waters, from Spike and the older seamen of the brig, during the time they had been lying at the Tortugas. Such questions and answers are common enough on board ship, and, as they are usually put and given with intelligence, one of our mate's general knowledge of his profession was likely to carry away much useful information. By conversations of this nature, and by consulting the charts, which Spike did not affect to conceal after the name of his port became known, the young man, in fact, had so far made himself master of the subject as to have tolerably accurate notions of the courses, distances, and general peculiarities of the reef. When the sun went down, he supposed himself to be about half-way across the space of open water and some five-and-twenty miles dead to windward of his port of departure. This was doing very well for the circumstances, and Mulford believed himself and his companions clear of Spike, when, as night drew its veil over the tranquil sea, nothing was in sight.

A very judicious arrangement was made for the watches on board the Mexican schooner, on this important night. Mrs. Budd had a great fancy to keep a watch, for once in her life, and, after the party had supped, and the subject came up in the natural course of things, a dialogue like this occurred:

"Harry must be fatigued," said Rose, kindly, "and must want sleep. The wind is so light, and the weather appears to be so settled, that I think it would be better for him to 'turn in' as he calls it;" here Rose laughed so prettily that the handsome mate wished she would repeat the words—"better that he should 'turn in' now, and we can call him should there be need of his advice or assistance. I daresay Jack Tier and I can take very good care of the schooner until daylight."

Mrs. Budd thought it would be no more than proper for one of her experience and years to rebuke this levity, as well as to enlighten the ignorance her niece had betrayed.

"You should be cautious, my child, how you propose anything to be done on a ship's board," observed the aunt. "It requires great experience and a suitable knowledge of rigging to give maritime advice. Now, as might have been expected, considering your years, and the short time you have been at sea, you have made several serious mistakes in what you have proposed. In the first place, there should always be a mate on the deck, as I have heard your dear departed uncle say, again and again; and how can there be a mate on the deck, if Mr. Mulford 'turns in,' as you propose, seeing that he's the only mate we have? Then you should never laugh at any maritime expression, for each and all are, as a body might say, solemnized by storms and dangers. That Harry is fatigued, I think is very probable; and he must set out watches, as they call it, when he can make his arrangements for the night, and take his rest as is usual. Here is my watch to begin with; and I'll engage he does not find

it two minutes out of the way, though yours, Rosy dear, like most girls' timepieces, is, I'll venture to say, dreadfully wrong. Where is your chronometer, Mr. Mulford? Let us see how this excellent watch of mine, which was once my poor departed Mr. Budd's will agree with that piece of yours, which I have heard you say is excellent."

Here was a flight in science and nautical language that poor Mulford could not have anticipated, even in the captain's relict! That Mrs. Budd should mistake "setting the watch" for "setting our watches," was not so very violent a blunder that one ought to be much astonished at it in *her;* but that she should expect to find a chronometer that was intended to keep the time of Greenwich agreeing with a watch that was set for the time of New York betrayed a degree of ignorance that the handsome mate was afraid Rose would resent on him, when the mistake was made to appear. As the widow held out her own watch for the comparison, however, he could not refuse to produce his own. By Mrs. Budd's watch it was past seven o'clock, while by his own, or the Greenwich-set chronometer, it was a little past twelve.

"How very wrong your watch is, Mr. Mulford," cried the good lady, "notwithstanding all you have said in its favor! It's quite five hours too fast, I do declare; and now, Rosy dear, you see the importance of setting watches on a ship's board, as is done every evening, my departed husband has often told me."

"Harry's must be what he calls a dog-watch, aunty," said Rose, laughing, though she scarce knew at what.

"The watch goes, too," added the widow, raising the chronometer to her ear, "though it is so very wrong. Well, set it, Mr. Mulford; then we will set Rose's, which I'll engage is half an hour out of the way, though it can never be as wrong as yours."

Mulford was a good deal embarrassed, but he gained courage by looking at Rose, who appeared to him to be quite as much mystified as her aunt. For once he hoped Rose was ignorant; for nothing would be so likely to diminish the feeling produced by the exposure of the aunt's mistake as to include the niece in the same category.

"My watch is a chronometer, you will recollect, Mrs. Budd," said the young man.

"I know it; and they ought to keep the very best time—*that* I've always heard. My poor Mr. Budd had two, and they were as large as compasses, and sold for hundreds after his lamented decease."

"They were ship's chronometers, but mine was made for the pocket. It is true, chronometers are intended to keep the most accurate time, and usually they do; this of mine, in particular, would not lose ten seconds in a twelvemonth, did I not carry it on my person."

"No, no, it does not seem to lose any, Harry; it only gains," cried Rose, laughing.

Mulford was now satisfied, notwithstanding all that had passed on a previous occasion, that the laughing, bright-eyed, and quick-witted girl at his elbow knew no more of the uses of a chronometer than her unusually dull and ignorant aunt; and he felt himself relieved from all embarrassment at once. Though he dared not even seem to distrust Mrs. Budd's intellect or knowledge before Rose, he did not scruple to laugh at Rose herself, to Rose. With *her* there was no jealousy on the score of capacity, her quickness being almost as obvious to all who approached her as her beauty.

"Rose Budd, you do not understand the uses of a chronometer, I see," said the mate, firmly, "notwithstanding all I have told you concerning them."

"It is to keep time, Harry Mulford, is it not?"

"True, to keep time—but to keep the time of a particular meridian; you know what a meridian means, I hope?"

Rose looked intently at her lover, and she looked singularly lovely, for she blushed slightly, though her smile was as open and amicable as ingenuousness and affection could make it.

"A meridian means a point over our heads—the spot where the sun is at noon," said Rose, doubtingly.

"Quite right; but it also means longitude, in one sense. If you draw a line from one pole to the other all the places it crosses are on the same meridian. As the sun first appears in the east, it follows that he rises sooner in places that are east than in places that are further west. Thus it is that at Greenwich, in England, where there is an observatory made for nautical purposes, the sun rises about five hours sooner than it does here. All this difference is subject to rules, and we know exactly how to measure it.

"How can that be, Harry? You told me this but the other day, yet I have forgotten it."

"Quite easily. As the earth turns round in just twenty-four hours, and its circumference is divided into three hundred and sixty equal parts, called degrees, we have only to divide 360 by 24, to know how many of these degrees are included in the difference produced by one hour of time. There are just fifteen of them, as you will find by multiplying 24 by 15. It follows that the sun rises just one hour later, each fifteen degrees of longitude, as you go west, or one hour earlier each fifteen degrees of longitude, as you go east. Having ascertained the difference by the hour, it is easy enough to calculate for the minutes and seconds."

"Yes, yes," said Rose, eagerly, "I see all that—go on."

"Now a chronometer is nothing but a watch, made with great care, so as not to lose or gain more than a few seconds in a twelvemonth. Its whole merit is in keeping time accurately."

"Still I do not see how that can be anything more but a very good watch."

"You *will* see in a minute, Rose. For purposes that you will presently understand, books are calculated for certain meridians, or longitudes, as at Greenwich and Paris; and those who use the books calculated for Greenwich, get their chronometers set at Greenwich; and those who use the Paris, get their chronometers set to Paris time. When I was last in England, I took this watch to Greenwich, and had it set at the observatory by the true solar time. Ever since it has been running by that time, and what you see here is the true Greenwich time, after allowing for a second or two that it may have lost or gained."

"All this is plain enough," said the much-interested Rose; "but of what use is it all?"

"To help mariners to find their longitude at sea, and thus know where they are. As the sun passes so far north and so far south of the equator each year, it is easy enough to find the latitude, by observing his position at noonday, but for a long time seamen had great difficulty in ascertaining their longitudes. That, too, is done by observing the different heavenly bodies, and with greater accuracy than by any other process; but this thought of measuring the time is very simple, and so easily put in practice, that we all run by it now."

"Still I cannot understand it," said Rose, looking so intently, so eagerly, and so intelligently into the handsome mate's eyes, that he found it was pleasant to teach her other things beside how to love.

"I will explain it. Having the Greenwich time in the watch, we observe the sun, in order to ascertain the true time, wherever we may happen to be. It is a simple thing to ascertain the true time of day by an observation of the sun, which marks the hour in his track; and when we get our observation, we have some one to note the time at a particular instant on the chronometer. By noting the hour, minutes, and seconds, at Greenwich, at the very instant we observe here, when we have calculated from that observation the time here, we have only to add or subtract the time here from that of Greenwich, to know precisely how far east or west we are from Greenwich, which gives us our longitude."

"I begin to comprehend it again," exclaimed Rose, delighted at the acquisition in knowledge she had just made. "How beautiful it is, yet how simple! but why do I forget it?"

"Perfectly simple and perfectly sure, too, when the chronometer is accurate, and the observations are nicely made. It is seldom we are more than eight or ten

miles out of the way, and for them we keep a lookout. It is only to ascertain the time where you are, by means that are easily used, then look at your watch to learn the time of day at Greenwich, or any other meridian you may have selected, and to calculate your distance, east or west, from that meridian, by the difference in the two times."

Rose could have listened all night, for her quick mind readily comprehended the principle which lies at the bottom of this useful process, though still ignorant of some of the details. This time she was determined to secure her acquisitions, though it is quite probable that, womanlike, they were once more lost, almost as easily as made. Mulford, however, was obliged to leave her, to look at the vessel, before he stretched himself on the deck in an old sail; it having been previously determined that he should sleep first, while the wind was light, and that Jack Tier, assisted by the females, should keep the first watch. Rose would not detain the mate, therefore, but let him go his way, in order to see that all was right before he took his rest.

Mrs. Budd had listened to Mulford's second explanation of the common mode of ascertaining the longitude, with all the attention of which she was capable; but it far exceeded the powers of her mind to comprehend it. There are persons who accustom themselves to think so superficially, that it becomes a painful process to attempt to dive into any of the *arcana* of nature, and who ever turn from such investigations wearied and disgusted. Many of these persons, perhaps most of them, need only a little patience and perseverance to comprehend all the more familiar phenomena, but they cannot command even that much of the two qualities named to obtain the knowledge they would fain wish to possess. Mrs. Budd did not belong to a division as high in the intellectual scale as even this vapid class. Her intellect was unequal to embracing anything of an abstract character, and only received the most obvious impressions, and those quite half the time it received wrong. The mate's reasoning, therefore, was not only inexplicable to her, but it sounded absurd and impossible.

"Rosy dear," said the worthy relict, as soon as she saw Mulford stretch his fine frame on his bed of canvas, speaking at the same time in a low confidential tone to her niece, "what was it that Harry was telling you a little while ago? It sounded to me like rank nonsense; and men *will* talk nonsense to young girls, as I have so often warned you, child. You must never listen to their *nonsense*, Rosy; but remember your catechism and confirmation vow, and be a good girl."

To how many of the feeble-minded and erring do those offices of the church prove a stay and support, when their own ordinary powers of resistance would fail them! Rose, however, viewed the matter just as it was, and answered accordingly.

"But this was nothing of that nature, aunty," she said, "and only an account of the mode of finding out where a ship is when out of sight of land, in the middle of the ocean. We had the same subject up the other day."

"And how did Harry tell you, this time, that was done, my dear?"

"By finding the difference in the time of day between two places—just as he did before."

"But there *is* no difference in the time of day, child, when the clocks go well."

"Yes, there is, aunty dear, as the sun rises in one place before it does in another."

"Rose, you've been listening to nonsense now! Remember what I have so often told you about young men, and their way of talking. I admit Harry Mulford is a respectable youth, and has respectable connections; and since you like one another, you may have him, with all my heart, as soon as he gets a full-jiggered ship, for I am resolved no niece of my poor dear husband's shall ever marry a mate, or a captain even, unless he has a full-jiggered ship under his feet. But do not talk nonsense with him. Nonsense is nonsense, though a sensible man talks it. As for all this stuff about the time of day,

you can see it is nonsense, as the sun rises but once in twenty-four hours, and of course there cannot be two times as you call it."

"But, aunty dear, it is not always noon at London when it is noon at New York."

"Fiddle-faddle, child! noon is noon, and there are no more two noons than two suns, or two times. Distrust what young men tell you, Rosy, if you would be safe, though they should tell you you are handsome."

Poor Rose sighed, and gave up the explanation in despair. Then a smile played round her pretty mouth. It was not at her aunt that she smiled; this she never permitted herself to do, weak as was that person, and weak as she saw her to be; she smiled at the recollection how often Mulford had hinted at her good looks—for Rose was a female, and had her own weaknesses as well as another. But the necessity of acting soon drove these thoughts from her mind, and Rose sought Jack Tier, to confer with him on the subject of their new duties.

As for Harry Mulford, his head was no sooner laid on its bunch of sail than he fell into a profound sleep. There he lay, slumbering as the seaman slumbers, with no sense of surrounding things. The immense fatigues of that and of the two preceding days—for he had toiled at the pumps even long after night had come, until the vessel was clear—weighed him down, and nature was now claiming her influence, and taking a respite from exertion. Had he been left to himself, it is probable the mate would not have arisen until the sun had reappeared some hours.

It is now necessary to explain more minutely the precise condition as well as the situation of the schooner. On quitting his port, Mulford had made a stretch of some two leagues in length toward the northward and eastward, when he tacked and stood to the southward. There was enough of southing in the wind to make his last course nearly due south. As he neared the reef he found that he fell in some miles to the eastward of the islets—proof that he was doing very well and that there was no current to do him any material harm, if, indeed, there were not actually a current in his favor. He next tacked to the northward again, and stood in that direction until near night, when he once more went about. The wind was now so light that he saw little prospect of getting in with the reef again until the return of day; but as he had left orders with Jack Tier to be called at twelve o'clock at all events, this gave him no uneasiness. At the time when the mate lay down to take his rest, therefore, the schooner was quite five-and-twenty miles to windward of the Dry Tortugas, and some twenty miles to the northward of the Florida Reef, with the wind quite light at east-south-east. Such, then, was the position or situation of the schooner.

As respects her condition, it is easily described. She had but the three sails bent—mainsail, foresail, and jib. Her topmasts had been struck, and all the hamper that belonged to them was below. The mainsail was single-reefed, and the foresail and jib were without their bonnets, as has already been mentioned. This was somewhat short canvas, but Mulford knew that it would render his craft more manageable in the event of a blow. Usually, at that season and in that region, the east trades prevailed with great steadiness, sometimes diverging a little south of east, as at present, and generally blowing fresh. But, for a short time previously to, and ever since the tornado, the wind had been unsettled, the old currents appearing to regain their ascendency by fits, and then losing it, in squalls, contrary currents, and even by short calms.

The conference between Jack Tier and Rose was frank and confidential.

"We must depend mainly on you," said the latter, turning to look toward the spot where Mulford lay, buried in the deepest sleep that had ever gained power over him. "Harry is *so* fatigued! It would be shameful to awaken him a moment sooner than is necessary."

"Ay, ay; so it is always with young women, when they lets a young man gain their ears," answered Jack, without the least circumlocution; "so it is, and so it

always will be, I'm afraid. Nevertheless, men is willians."

Rose was not affronted at this plain allusion to the power that Mulford had obtained over her feelings. It would seem that Jack had got to be so intimate in the cabins, that his sex was, in a measure, forgotten; and it is certain that his recent services were not. Without a question, but for his interference, the pretty Rose Budd would, at that moment, have been the prisoner of Spike, and most probably the victim of his design to compel her to mary him.

"All men are not Stephen Spikes," said Rose, earnestly, "and least of all is Harry Mulford to be reckoned as one of his sort. But we must manage to take care of the schooner the whole night, and let Harry get his rest. He wished to be called at twelve, but we can easily let the hour go by, and not awaken him."

"The commanding officer ought not to be sarved so, Miss Rose. What he says is to be done."

"I know it, Jack, as to ordinary matters; but Harry left these orders that we might have our share of rest, and for no other reason at all. And what is to prevent our having it? We are four, and can divide ourselves into two watches; one watch can sleep while the other keeps a lookout."

"Ay, ay, and pretty watches they *would* be! There's Madam Budd, now; why, she's quite a navigator, and knows all about weerin' and haulin', and I dares to say could put the schooner about, to keep her off the reef, on a pinch; though which way the craft would come round, could best be told a'ter it has been done. It's as much as *I'd* undertake myself, Miss Rose, to take care of the schooner, should it come on to blow; and as for you, Madam Budd, and that squalling Irishwoman, you'd be no better than so many housewives ashore."

"We have strength, and we have courage, and we can pull, as you have seen. I know very well which way to put the helm now, and Biddy is as strong as you are yourself, and could help me all I wished. Then we could always call you, at need, and have your assistance. Nay, Harry himself can be called, if there should be a real necessity for it, and I *do* wish he may not be disturbed until there *is* that necessity."

It was with a good deal of reluctance that Jack allowed himself to be persuaded into this scheme. He insisted, for a long time, that an officer should be called at the hour mentioned by himself, and declared he had never known such an order neglected, "marchantman, privateer, or man-of-war." Rose prevailed over his scruples, however, and there was a meeting of the three females to make the final arrangements. Mrs. Budd, a kind-hearted woman, at the worst, gave her assent most cheerfully, though Rose was a little startled with the nature of the reasoning with which it was accompanied.

"You are quite right, Rosy dear," said the aunt, "and the thing is very easily done. I've long wanted to keep one watch at sea; just one watch, to complete my maritime education. Your poor uncle used to say, 'Give my wife but one night-watch, and you'd have as good a seaman in her as heart could wish.' I'm sure I've had night-watches enough with him and his ailings; but it seems that *they* were not the sort of watches he meant. Indeed, I didn't know till this evening there were so many watches in the world at all. But this is just what I want, and just what I'm resolved to have. Tier shall command one watch and I'll command the other. Jack's shall be the 'dog-watch,' as they call it, and mine shall be the 'middle-watch,' and last till morning. You shall be in Jack's watch, Rose, and Biddy shall be in mine. You know a good deal that Jack don't know, and Biddy can do a good deal I'm rather too stout to do. I don't like pulling ropes, but as for *ordering*, I'll turn my back on no captain's widow out of York."

Rose had her own misgivings on the subject of her aunt's issuing orders on such a subject to any one, but she made the best of necessity, and completed the arrangements without further discussion. Her great anxiety was to secure a good night's rest for Harry, already feeling a

woman's care in the comfort and ease of the man she loved. And Rose did love Harry Mulford warmly and sincerely. If the very decided preference with which she regarded him before they sailed had not absolutely amounted to passion, it had come so very near it, as to render that access of feeling certain, under the influence of the association and events which succeeded. We have not thought it necessary to relate a tithe of the interviews and intercourse that had taken place between the handsome mate and the pretty Rose Budd during the month they had been shipmates, having left the reader to imagine the natural course of things under such circumstances. Nevertheless the plighted troth had not been actually given until Harry joined her on the islet, at a moment when she fancied herself abandoned to a fate almost as serious as death. Rose had seen Mulford quit the brig, had watched the mode and manner of his escape, and in almost breathless amazement, and felt how dear to her he had become, by the glow of delight which warmed her heart when assured that he could not, would not, forsake her, even though he remained at the risk of life. She was now, true to the instinct of her sex, mostly occupied in making such a return for an attachment so devoted as became her tenderness and the habits of her mind.

As Mrs. Budd chose what she was pleased to term the "middle-watch," giving to Jack Tier and Rose her "dog-watch," the two last were first on duty. It is scarcely necessary to say the captain's widow got the names of the watches all wrong, as she got the names of everything else about a vessel; but the plan was to divide the night equally between these *quasi* mariners, giving the first half to those who were first on the lookout, and the remainder to their successors. It soon became so calm, that Jack left the helm and came and sat by Rose on the trunk, where they conversed confidentially for a long time. Although the reader will, hereafter, be enabled to form some plausible conjectures on the subject of this dialogue, we shall give him no part of it here. All that need now be said, is to add that Jack did most of the talking, that his past life was the principal theme, and that the terrible Stephen Spike, he from whom they were now so desirous of escaping, was largely mixed up with the adventures recounted. Jack found in his companion a deeply interested listener, although this was by no means the first time they had gone over together the same story and discussed the same events. The conversation lasted until Tier, who watched the glass, seeing that its sands had run out for the last time, announced the hour of midnight. This was the moment when Mulford should have been called, but when Mrs. Budd and Biddy Noon were actually awakened in his stead.

"Now, dear aunty," said Rose, as she parted from the new watch to go and catch a little sleep herself, "remember you are not to awaken Harry first, but to call Tier and myself. It would have done your heart good to have seen how sweetly he has been sleeping all this time. I do not think he has stirred once, his head was laid on that bunch of sails, and there he is, at this moment, sleeping like an infant!"

"Yes," returned the relict, "it is always so with your true maritime people, I have been sleeping a great deal more soundly the whole of the dog-watch than I ever slept at home in my own excellent bed. But it's your watch below, Rosy, and contrary to the rule for you to stay on the deck after you've been relieved. I've heard this a thousand times."

Rose was not sorry to lie down; and her head was scarcely on its pillow in the cabin before she was fast asleep. As for Jack, he found a place among Mulford's sails, and was quickly in the same state.

To own the truth, Mrs. Budd was not quite so much at ease in her new station, for the first half hour, as she had fancied to herself might prove to be the case. It was a flat calm, it is true; but the widow felt oppressed with responsibility and the novelty of her situation. Time and again had she said, and even imagined, she should be delighted to fill the very station she then occupied, or to be in charge of a

deck in a "middle-watch." In this instance, however, as in so many others, reality did not equal anticipation. She wished to be doing everything, but did not know how to do anything. As for Biddy, she was even worse off than her mistress. A month's experience, or for that matter a twelvemonth's, could not unravel to her the mysteries of even a schooner's rigging. Mrs. Budd had placed her "at the wheel," as she called it, though the vessel had no wheel, being steered by a tiller on deck, in the 'long-shore fashion. In stationing Biddy, the widow told her that she was to play "tricks at the wheel," leaving it to the astounded Irishwoman's imagination to discover what those tricks were. Failing in ascertaining what might be the nature of her "tricks at the wheel," Biddy was content to do nothing, and nothing, under the circumstances, was perhaps the very best thing she could have done.

Little was required to be done for the first four hours of Mrs. Budd's watch. All that time, Rose slept in her berth, and Mulford and Jack Tier on their sail, while Biddy had played the wheel a "trick," indeed, by lying down on deck, and sleeping, too, as soundly as if she were in the County Down itself. But there was to be an end of this tranquillity. Suddenly the wind began to blow. At first, the true breeze came in fitful puffs, which were neither very strong nor very lasting. This induced Mrs. Budd to awaken Biddy. Luckily, a schooner without a topsail could not very well be taken aback, especially as the head-sheets worked on travelers, and Mrs. Budd and her assistant contrived to manage the tiller very well for the first hour that these varying puffs of wind lasted. It is true the tiller was lashed, and it is also true the schooner ran in all directions, having actually headed to all the cardinal points of the compass, under her present management. At length Mrs. Budd became alarmed. A puff of wind came so strong as to cause the vessel to lie over so far as to bring the water into the lee scuppers. She called Jack Tier herself, therefore, and sent Biddy down to awaken Rose. In a minute both these auxiliaries appeared on deck. The wind just then lulled, and Rose, supposing her aunt was frightened at trifles, insisted on it that Harry should be permitted to sleep on. He had turned over once, in the course of the night, but not once had he raised his head from his pillow.

As soon as re-enforced, Mrs. Budd began to bustle about, and to give commands, such as they were, in order to prove that she was unterrified. Jack Tier gaped at her elbow, and by the way of something to do, he laid his hand on the painter of the *Swash's* boat, which boat was towing astern, and remarked that "some know-nothing had belayed it with three half-hitches." This was enough for the relict. She had often heard the saying that "*three* half-hitches lost the king's long-boat," and she busied herself, at once, in repairing so imminent an evil. It was far easier for the good woman to talk than to act; she became what is called "all fingers and thumbs," and in loosening the third half-hitch, she cast off the two others. At that instant a puff of wind struck the schooner again, and the end of the painter got away from the widow, who had a last glimpse at the boat, as the vessel darted ahead, leaving its little tender to vanish in the gloom of the night.

Jack was excessively provoked at this accident, for he had foreseen the possibility of having recourse to that boat yet, in order to escape from Spike. By abandoning the schooner, and pulling on to the reef, it might have been possible to get out of their pursuer's hands, when all other means should fail them. As he was at the tiller, he put his helm up, and ran off, until far enough to leeward to be to the westward of the boat, when he might tack, fetch, and recover it. Nevertheless, it now blew much harder than he liked, for the schooner seemed to be unusually tender. Had he had the force to do it, he would have brailed the foresail. He desired Rose to call Mulford, but she hesitated about complying.

"Call him—call the mate, I say," cried out Jack, in a voice that proved how much he was in earnest. "These puffs come

heavy, I can tell you, and they come often, too. Call him—call him, at once, Miss Rose, for it is time to tack, if we wish to recover the boat. Tell him, too, to brail the foresail while we are in stays—that's right; another call will start him up."

The other call was given, aided by a gentle shake from Rose's hand. Harry was on his feet in a moment. A passing instant was necessary to clear his faculties, and to recover the tenor of his thoughts. During that instant, the mate heard Jack Tier's shrill cry of "Hard-a lee—get in that foresail—bear-a-hand—in with it, I say!"

The wind came rushing and roaring, and the flaps of the canvas were violent and heavy.

"In with the foresail, I say," shouted Jack Tier. "She flies round like a top, and will be off the wind on the other tack presently. Bear-a-hand!—bear-a-hand! It looks black as night to windward."

Mulford then regained all his powers. He sprung to the foresheet, calling on the others for aid. The violent surges produced by the wind prevented his grasping the sheet as soon as he could wish, and the vessel whirled round on her heel, like a steed that is frightened. At that critical and dangerous instant, when the schooner was nearly without motion through the water, a squall struck the flattened sails, and bowed her down as the willow bends to the gale. Mrs. Budd and Biddy screamed as usual, and Jack shouted until his voice seemed cracked, to "let go the head-sheets." Mulford did make one leap forward, to execute this necessary office, when the inclining plane of the deck told him it was too late. The wind fairly howled for a minute, and over went the schooner, the remains of her cargo shifting as she capsized, in a way to bring her very nearly bottom upward.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Ay, fare you well, fair gentlemen."
—As You Like It.

While the tyro believes the vessel is about to capsize at every puff of wind, the practiced seaman alone knows when danger truly besets him in this particular form. Thus it was with Harry Mulford, when the Mexican schooner went over, as related in the close of the preceding chapter. He felt no alarm until the danger actually came. Then, indeed, no one there was so quickly or so thoroughly apprised of what the result would be, and he directed all his exertions to meet the exigency. While there was the smallest hope of success, he did not lessen, in the least, his endeavors to save the vessel; making almost superhuman efforts to cast off the fore-sheet, so as to relieve the schooner from the pressure of one of her sails. But no sooner did he hear the barrels in the hold surging to leeward, and feel by the inclination of the deck beneath his feet that nothing could save the craft, than he abandoned the sheet and sprung to the assistance of Rose. It was time he did; for, having followed him into the vessel's lee-waist, she was the first to be submerged in the sea, and would have been hopelessly drowned but for Mulford's timely succor. Women *might* swim more readily than men, and do so swim in those portions of the world where the laws of nature are not counteracted by human conventions. Rose Budd, however, had received the vicious education which civilized society inflicts on her sex, and, as a matter of course, was totally helpless in an element in which it was the design of Divine Providence she should possess the common means of sustaining herself, like every other being endued with animal life. Not so with Mulford; he swam with ease and force, and had no difficulty in sustaining Rose until the schooner had settled into her new berth, or in hauling her on the vessel's bottom immediately after.

Luckily, there was no swell, or so little as not to endanger those who were on the schooner's bilge; and Mulford had no sooner placed her in momentary safety at least, whom he prized far higher than his own life, than he bethought him of his other companions. Jack Tier had hauled himself up to windward by the rope that steadied the tiller, and he had called on Mrs. Budd to imitate his example. It

was so natural for even a woman to grasp anything like a rope at such a moment, that the window instinctively obeyed, while Biddy seized at random the first thing of the sort that offered. Owing to these fortunate chances, Jack and Mrs. Budd succeeded in reaching the quarter of the schooner, the former actually getting up on the bottom of the wreck, on to which he was enabled to float the widow, who was almost as buoyant as a cork, as indeed was the case with Jack himself. All the stern and bows of the vessel were under water, in consequence of her leanness forward and aft; but though submerged, she offered a precarious footing, even in these extremities, to such as could reach them. On the other hand, the place where Rose stood, on the bilge of the vessel, was two or three feet above the surface of the sea, though slippery and inclining in shape.

It was not half a minute from the time that Mulford sprung to Rose's succor ere he had her on the vessel's bottom. In another half minute he had waded down on the schooner's counter, where Jack Tier was lustily calling to him for "help!" and assisted the widow to her feet, and supported her until she stood at Rose's side. Leaving the last in her aunt's arms, half distracted between dread and joy, he turned to the assistance of Biddy. The rope at which the Irishwoman had caught was a straggling end that had been made fast to the main channels of the schooner, for the support of a fender, and had been hauled partly inboard to keep it out of the water. Biddy had found no difficulty in dragging herself up to the chains, therefore; and had she been content to sustain herself by the rope, leaving as much of her body submerged as comported with breathing, her task would have been easy. But, like most persons who do not know how to swim, the good woman was fast exhausting her strength, by vain efforts to walk on the surface of an element that was never made to sustain her. Unpracticed persons, in such situations, cannot be taught to believe that their greatest safety is in leaving as much of their bodies as possible beneath the water, keeping the mouth and nose alone free for breath. But we have seen instances in which men, who were in danger of drowning, seemed to believe it might be possible for them to crawl over the waves on their hands and knees. The philosophy of the contrary course is so very simple, that one would fancy a very child might be made to comprehend it; yet, it is rare to find one unaccustomed to the water, and who is suddenly exposed to its dangers, that does not resort, under the pressure of present alarm, to the very reverse of the true means to save his or her life.

Mulford had no difficulty in finding Bridget, whose exclamations of "Murther!" "Help!" "He-l-lup!" "Jasus!" and other similar cries led him directly to the spot where she was fast drowning herself by her own senseless struggles. Seizing her by the arm, the active young mate soon placed her on her feet, though her cries did not cease until she was ordered by her mistress to keep silence.

Having thus rescued the whole of his companions from immediate danger, Mulford began to think of the future. He was seized with sudden surprise that the vessel did not sink, and for a minute he was unable to account for the unusual fact. On the former occasion, the schooner had gone down almost as soon as she fell over; but now she floated with so much buoyancy as to leave most of her keel and all of her bilge on one side quite clear of the water. As one of the main hatches was off, and the cabin-doors and booby-hatch doors forward were open, and all were under water, it required a little reflection on the part of Mulford to understand on what circumstance all their lives now depended. The mate soon ascertained the truth, however, and we may as well explain it to the reader in our own fashion, in order to put him on a level with the young seaman.

The puff of wind, or little squall, had struck the schooner at the most unfavorable moment for safety. She had just lost her way in tacking, and the hull not moving ahead, as happens when a craft is thus assailed, with the motion on her, all

the power of the wind was expended in the direction necessary to capsize her. Another disadvantage arose from the want of motion. The rudder, which acts solely by pressing against the water as the vessel meets it, was useless, and it was not possible to luff, and throw the wind from the sails, as is usually practiced by fore-and-aft rigged craft, in moments of such peril. In consequence of these united difficulties, the shifting of the cargo in the hold, the tenderness of the craft itself, and the force of the squall, the schooner had gone so far over as to carry all three of the openings to her interior suddenly under water, where they remained, held by the pressure of the cargo that had rolled to leeward. Had not the water completely covered these openings, or hatches, the schooner must have sunk in a minute or two, or by the time Mulford had got all his companions safe on her bilge. But they were completely submerged, and so continued to be, which circumstance alone prevented the vessel from sinking, as the following simple explanation will show.

Any person who will put an empty tumbler, bottom upward, into a bucket of water, will find that the water will not rise within the tumbler more than an inch at most. At that point it is arrested by the resistance of the air, which, unable to escape, and compressed into a narrow compass, forms a body that the other fluid cannot penetrate. It is on this simple and familiar principle that the chemist keeps his gases, in inverted glasses, placing them on shelves, slightly submerged in water. Thus it was, then, that the schooner continued to float, though nearly bottom upward, and with three inlets open, by which the water could and did penetrate. A considerably quantity of the element had rushed in at the instant of capsizing, but meeting with resistance from the compressed and pent air, its progress had been arrested, and the wreck continued to float, sustained by the buoyancy that was imparted to it, in containing so large a body of a substance no heavier than atmospheric air. After displacing its weight of water, enough of buoyancy remained to raise the keel a few feet above the level of the sea.

As soon as Mulford had ascertained the facts of their situation, he communicated them to his companions, encouraging them to hope for eventual safety. It was true, their situation was nearly desperate, admitting that the wreck should continue to float forever, since they were almost without food, or anything to drink, and had no means of urging the hull through the water. They must float, too, at the mercy of the winds and waves, and should a sea get up it might soon be impossible for Mulford himself to maintain his footing on the bottom of the wreck. All this the young man had dimly shadowed forth to him through his professional experience; but the certainty of the vessel's not sinking immediately had so far revived his spirits as to cause him to look on the bright side of the future, pale as that glimmering of hope was made to appear whenever reason cast one of its severe glances athwart it.

Harry had no difficulty in making Rose comprehend their precise situation. Her active and clear mind understood at once the causes of their present preservation and most of the hazards of the future. It was not so with Jack Tier. He was composed, even resigned; but he could not see the reason why the schooner still floated.

"I know that the cabin-doors were open," he said, "and if they wasn't, of no great matter would it be, since the joints aren't calked, and the water would run through them as through a sieve. I'm afeared, Mr. Mulford, we shall find the wreck going from under our feet afore long, and when we least wish it, perhaps."

"I tell you the wreck will float so long as the air remains in its hold," returned the mate, cheerfully. "Do you not see how buoyant it is?—the certain proof that there is plenty of air within. So long as that remains, the hull *must* float."

"I've always understood," said Jack, sticking to his opinion, "that wessels floats by vartue of water, and not by

vartue of air; and that when the water gets on the wrong side on 'em, there's little hope left of keepin' 'em up."

"What has become of the boat?" suddenly cried the mate. "I have been so much occupied as to have forgotten the boat. In that boat we might all of us still reach Key West. I see nothing of the boat!"

A profound silence succeeded this sudden and unexpected question. All knew that the boat was gone, and all knew that it had been lost by the widow's pertinacity and clumsiness, but no one felt disposed to betray her at that grave moment. Mulford left the bilge, and waded as far aft as it was at all prudent for him to proceed, in the vain hope that the boat might be there, fastened by its painter to the schooner's taffrail, as he had left it, but concealed from view by the darkness of the night. Not finding what he was after, he returned to his companions, still uttering exclamations of surprise at the unaccountable loss of the boat. Rose now told him that the boat had got adrift some ten or fifteen minutes before the accident befell them, and that they were actually endeavoring to recover it when the squall which capsized the schooner struck them.

"And why did you not call me, Rose?" asked Harry, with a little of gentle reproach in his manner. "It must have soon been my watch on deck, and it would have been better that I should lose half an hour of my watch below, than that we should lose the boat."

Rose was now obliged to confess that the time for calling him had long been past, and that the faintest streak of light, which had just appeared in the east, was the near approach of day. This explanation was made gently, but frankly; and Mulford experienced a glow of pleasure at his heart, even in that moment of jeopardy, when he understood Rose's motive for not having him disturbed. As the boat was gone, with little or no prospect of its being recovered again, no more was said about it; and the widow, who had stood on thorns the while, had the relief of believing that her awkwardness was forgotten.

It was such a relief from an imminent danger to have escaped from drowning when the schooner capsized, that those on her bottom did not, for some little time, realize all the terrors of their actual situation. The inconvenience of being wet was a trifle not to be thought of, and, in fact, the light summer dresses worn by all, linen or cotton as they were entirely, were soon effectually dried in the wind. The keel made a tolerably convenient seat, and the whole party placed themselves on it to await the return of day, in order to obtain a view of all that their situation offered in the way of a prospect. While thus awaiting, a broken and short dialogue occurred.

"Had you stood to the northward the whole night?" asked Mulford, gloomily, of Jack Tier; for gloomily he began to feel, as all the facts of their case began to press more closely on his mind. "If so, we must be well off the reef, and out of the track of wreckers and turtlers. How had you the wind, and how did you head before the accident happened?"

"The wind was light the whole time, and for some hours it was nearly calm," answered Jack, in the same vein. "I kept the schooner's head to the nor'ard, until I thought we were getting too far off our course, and then I put her about. I do not think we could have been any great distance from the reef, when the boat got away from us, and I suppose we are in its neighborhood now, for I was tacking to fall in with the boat when the craft went over."

"To fall in with the boat! Did you keep off to leeward of it, then, that you expected to fetch it by tacking?"

"Ay, a good bit; and I think the boat is now away here to windward of us, drifting athwart our bows."

This was important news to Mulford. Could he only get that boat, the chances of being saved would be increased a hundred-fold, nay, would almost amount to a certainty; whereas, so long as the wind blew to the southward and eastward, the drift of the wreck must be toward the open water, and, consequently, so much the further removed from the

means of succor. The general direction of the trades, in that quarter of the world, is east, and should they get round in their old and proper quarter, it would not benefit them much; for the reef runing southwest, they could scarcely hope to hit the Dry Tortugas again, in their drift, were life even spared them sufficiently long to float the distance. Then there might be currents, about which Mulford knew nothing with certainty; they might set them in any direction; and did they exist, as was almost sure to be the case, were much more powerful than the wind in controlling the movements of a wreck.

The mate strained his eyes in the direction pointed out by Jack Tier, in the hope of discovering the boat through the haze of the morning, and he actually did discern something that, it appeared to him, might be the much-desired little craft. If he were right, there was every reason to think the boat would drift down so near them as to enable him to recover it by swimming. This cheering intelligence was communicated to his companions, who received it with gratitude and delight. But the approach of day gradually dispelled that hope; the object which Mulford had mistaken for the boat, within two hundred yards of the wreck, turning out to be a small, low, but bare hummock of the reef, at a distance of more than two miles.

"That is a proof that we are not far from the reef, at least," cried Mulford, willing to encourage those around him all he could, and really much relieved at finding himself so near even this isolated fragment of *terra firma*. "This fact is the next encouraging thing to finding ourselves near the boat, or to falling in with a sail."

"Ay, ay," said Jack, gloomily; "boat or no boat, 'twill make no great matter of difference now. *There's* customers that'll be sartin to take all the grists you can send to their mill."

"What things are those glancing about the vessel?" cried Rose, almost in the same breath; "those dark, sharp-looking sticks—see, there are five or six of them! and they move as if they were fastened to something under the water that pulls them about."

"Them's the customers I mean, Miss Rose," answered Jack, in the same strain as that in which he had first spoken; "they're the same thing at sea as lawyers be ashore, and seem made to live on other folks. Them's sharks."

"And yonder is truly the boat!" added Mulford, with a sigh that almost amounted to a groan. The light had, by this time, so far returned as to enable the party not only to see the fins of half a dozen sharks, which were already prowling about the wreck, the almost necessary consequence of their proximity to a reef in that latitude, but actually to discern the boat drifting down toward them, at a distance that promised to carry it past, within the reach of Mulford's powers of swimming, though not as near as he could have wished, even under more favorable circumstances. Had their extremity been greater, or had Rose begun to suffer from hunger or thirst, Mulford might have attempted the experiment of endeavoring to regain the boat, though the chances of death, by means of the sharks, would be more than equal to those of escape; but still fresh, and not yet feeling even the heat of the sun of that low latitude, he was not quite goaded into such an act of desperation. All that remained for the party, therefore, was to sit on the keel of the wreck and gaze with longing eyes at a little object floating past, which, once at their command, might so readily be made to save them from a fate that already began to appear terrible in the perspective. Nearly an hour was thus consumed ere the boat was about half a mile to leeward, during which scarcely an eye was turned from it for one instant, or a word was spoken.

"It is beyond my reach now!" Mulford at length exclaimed, sighing heavily, like one who became conscious of some great and irretrievable loss. "Were there no sharks, I could hardly venture to attempt swimming so far, with the boat drifting from me at the same time."

"I should never consent to let you make

the trial, Harry," murmured Rose, "though it were only half as far."

Another pause succeeded.

"We have now the light of day," resumed the mate, a minute or two later, "and may see our true situation. No sail is in sight, and the wind stands steadily in its old quarter. Still, I do not think we leave the reef. There, you may see breakers off here at the southward, and it seems as if more rocks rise above the sea in that direction. I do not know that our situation would be any the better, however, were we actually on them, instead of being on this floating wreck."

"The rocks will never sink," said Jack Tier, with so much emphasis as to startle his listeners.

"I do not think this hull will sink until we are taken off it, or are beyond caring whether it sink or swim," returned Mulford.

"I do not know that, Mr. Mulford. Nothing keeps us up but the air in the hold, you say."

"Certainly not; but that air will suffice as long as it remains there."

"And what do you call these things?" rejoined the assistant steward, pointing at the water near him, in or on which no one saw anything worthy of attention.

Mulford, however, was not satisfied with a cursory glance, but went nearer to the spot where Tier was standing. Then, indeed, he saw to what the steward alluded, and was impressed by it, though he said nothing. Hundreds of little bubbles rose to the surface of the water, much as one sees them rising in springs. These bubbles are often met with in lakes and other comparatively shallow waters, but they are rarely ever seen in those of the ocean. The mate understood, at a glance, that those he now beheld were produced by the air which escaped from the hold of the wreck; in small quantities at a time, it was true, but by a constant and increasing process. The great pressure of the water forced this air through crevices so minute that, under ordinary circumstances, they would have proved impenetrable to this, as they were still to the other fluid, though they now permitted the passage of the former. It might take a long time to force the air from the interior of the vessel by such means, but the result was as certain as it might be slow. As constant dropping will wear a stone, so might the power that kept the wreck afloat be exhausted by the ceaseless rising of these minute air-bubbles.

Although Mulford was entirely sensible of the nature of this new source of danger, we cannot say he was much affected by it at the moment. It seemed to him far more probable that they must die of exhaustion, long before the wreck would lose all of its buoyancy by this slow process, than that even the strongest of their number could survive for such a period. The new danger, therefore, lost most of its terrors under this view of the subject, though it certainly did not add to the small sense of security that remained, to know that inevitably their fate must be sealed through its agency, should they be able to hold out for a sufficient time against hunger and thirst. It caused Mulford to muse in silence for many more minutes.

"I hope we are not altogether without food," the mate at length said. "It sometimes happens that persons at sea carry pieces of biscuit in their pockets, especially those who keep watch at night. The smallest morsel is now of the last importance."

At this suggestion, every one set about the examination. The result was, that neither Mrs. Budd nor Rose had a particle of food, of any sort, about their persons. Biddy produced from her pockets, however, a whole biscuit, a large bunch of excellent raisins that she had filched from the steward's stores, and two apples—the last being the remains of some fruit that Spike had procured a month earlier in New York. Mulford had half a biscuit, at which he had been accustomed to nibble in his watches; and Jack lugged out, along with a small plug of tobacco, a couple of sweet oranges. Here, then, was everything in the shape of victuals, or drink, that could be found for the use of five persons, in all probability for many days. The importance of securing it for

equal distribution was so obvious that Mulford's proposal to do so was met with a common assent. The whole was put in Mrs. Budd's bag, and she was intrusted with the keeping of this precious store.

"It may be harder to abstain from food at first, when we have not suffered from its want, than it will become after a little endurance," said the mate. "We are now strong, and it will be wiser to fast as long as we conveniently can, to-day, and relieve our hunger by a moderate allowance toward evening, than to waste our means by too much indulgence at a time when we are strong. Weakness will be sure to come if we remain long on the wreck."

"Have you ever suffered in this way, Harry?" demanded Rose, with interest.

"I have, and that dreadfully. But a merciful Providence came to my rescue then, and it may not fail me now. The seaman is accustomed to carry his life in his hand, and to live on the edge of eternity."

The truth of this was so apparent as to produce a thoughtful silence. Anxious glances were cast around the horizon from time to time, in quest of any sail that might come in sight, but uselessly. None appeared, and the day advanced without bringing the slightest prospect of relief. Mulford could see, by the now almost sunken hummocks, that they were slowly drifting along the reef, toward the southward and eastward, a current no doubt acting slightly from the northwest. Their proximity to the reef, however, was of no advantage, as the distance was still so great as to render any attempt to reach it, even on the part of the mate, unavailable. Nor would he have been any better off could he have gained a spot on the rocks that was shallow enough to admit of his walking, since wading about in such a place would have been less desirable than to be floating where he was.

The want of water to drink threatened to be the great evil. Of this the party on the wreck had not a single drop! As the warmth of the day was added to the feverish feeling produced by excitement, they all experienced thirst, though no one murmured. So utterly without means of relieving this necessity did each person know them all to be that no one spoke on the subject at all. In fact, shipwreck never produced a more complete destitution of all the ordinary agents of helping themselves, in any form or manner, than was the case here. So sudden and complete had been the disaster, that not a single article, beyond those on the persons of the sufferers, came even in view. The masts, sails, rigging, spare spars, in a word, everything belonging to the vessel, was submerged and hidden from their sight, with the exception of a portion of the vessel's bottom, which might be forty feet in length, and some ten or fifteen in width, including that which was above water on both sides of the keel, though one only of these sides was available to the females, as a place to move about on. Had Mulford only a boat-hook he would have felt it a relief; for not only did the sharks increase in number, but they grew more audacious, swimming so near the wreck that, more than once, Mulford apprehended that some one of the boldest of them might make an effort literally to board them. It is true, he had never known of one of these fishes attempting to quit his own element in pursuit of his prey; but such things were reported, and those around the wreck swam so close, and seemed so eager to get at those who were on it, that there really might be some excuse for fancying they might resort to unusual means of effecting their object. It is probable that, like other animals, they were emboldened by their own numbers, and were acting in a sort of concert that was governed by some of the many mysterious laws of nature that have still escaped human observation.

Thus passed the earlier hours of that appalling day. Toward noon Mulford had insisted on the females dividing one of the oranges between them, and extracting its juice by way of assuaging their thirst. The effect was most grateful, as all admitted, and even Mrs. Budd urged Harry and Tier to take a portion of the remaining orange; but this both steadily refused. Mulford did consent to receive

a small portion of one of the apples, more with a view of moistening his throat than to appease his hunger, though it had, in a slight degree, the latter effect also. As for Jack Tier, he declined even the morsel of apple, saying that tobacco answered his purpose, as indeed it temporarily might. It was near sunset when the steward's assistant called Mulford aside, and whispered to him that he had something private to communicate. The mate bade him say on, as they were out of ear-shot of their companions.

"I've been in situations like this afore," said Jack, "and one larns exper'ence. I know how cruel it is on the feelin's to have the hopes disappi'nted in these cases, and therefore shall proceed with caution. But, Mr. Mulford, there's a sail in sight, if there's a drop of water in the Gulf."

"A sail, Jack! I trust in Heaven you are not deceived."

"Old eyes are true eyes in such matters, sir. Be careful not to start the women. They go off like gunpowder, and, Lord help 'em! have no more command over themselves, when you loosen 'em once, than so many flying-fish with a dozen dolphins a'ter them. Look hereaway, sir, just clear of the Irishwoman's bonnet, a little broad off the spot where the reef was last seen—if that ain't a sail my name is not Jack Tier!"

A sail there was, sure enough! It was so very distant, however, as to render its character still uncertain, though Mulford fancied it was a square-rigged vessel heading to the northward. By its position it must be in one of the channels of the reef, and by its course, if he were not deceived, it was standing through, from the main passage along the southern side of the rocks, to come out on the northern. All this was favorable, and at first the young mate felt such a throbbing of the heart as we all experience when great and unexpected good intelligence is received. A moment's reflection, however, made him aware how little was to be hoped for from this vessel. In the first place, her distance was so great as to render it uncertain even which way she was steering. Then, there was the probability that she would pass at so great a distance as to render it impossible to perceive an object so low as the wreck, and the additional chance of her passing in the night. Under all the circumstances, therefore, Mulford felt convinced that there was very little probability of their receiving any succor from the strange sail; and he fully appreciated Jack Tier's motive in forbearing to give the usual call of "Sail-ho!" when he made this discovery. Still, he could not deny himself the pleasure of communicating to Rose the cheering fact that a vessel was actually in sight. She could not reason on the circumstances as he had done, and might at least pass several hours of comparative happiness by believing that there was some visible chance of delivery.

The females received the intelligence with very different degrees of hope. Rose was delighted. To her their rescue appeared an event so very probable now that Harry Mulford almost regretted he had given rise to an expectation which he himself feared was to be disappointed. The feelings of Mrs. Budd were more suppressed. The wreck and her present situation were so completely at variance with all her former notions of the sea and its incidents, that she was almost dumfounded, and feared either to speak or to think. Biddy differed from either of her mistresses—the young or the old; she appeared to have lost *all* hope, and her physical energy was fast giving way under her profound moral debility.

From the return of light that day, Mulford had thought if it were to prove that Providence had withdrawn its protecting hand from them, Biddy, who to all appearance ought to be the longest liver, among the females at least, would be the first to sink under her sufferings. Such is the influence of moral causes on the mere animal.

Rose saw the night shut in around them, amid the solemn solitude of the ocean, with a mingled sensation of awe and hope. She had prayed devoutly, and often, in the course of the preceding day, and her devotions had contributed to calm her

spirits. Once or twice, while kneeling with her head bowed to the keel, she had raised her eyes toward Harry with a look of entreaty, as if she would implore him to humble his proud spirit and place himself at her side, and ask that succor from God which was so much needed, and which, indeed, it began most seriously to appear that God alone could yield. The young mate did not comply, for his pride of profession and of manhood offered themselves as stumbling-blocks to prevent submission to his secret wishes. Though he rarely prayed, Harry Mulford was far from being an unbeliever, or one altogether regardless of his duties and obligations to his divine Creator. On the contrary, his heart was more disposed to resort to such means of self-abasement and submission than he put in practice, and this because he had been taught to believe that the Anglo-Saxon mariner did not call on Hercules, on every occasion of difficulty and distress that occurred, as was the fashion with the Italian and Romish seamen, but he put his own shoulder to the wheel, confident that Hercules would not forget to help him who knew how to help himself. But Harry had great difficulty in withstanding Rose's silent appeal that evening, as she knelt at the keel for the last time, and turned her gentle eyes upward at him, as if to ask him once more to take his place at her side. Withstand the appeal he did, however, though in his inward spirit he prayed fervently to God to put away this dreadful affliction from the young and innocent creature before him. When these evening devotions were ended, the whole party became thoughtful and silent.

It was necessary to sleep, and arrangements were made to do so, if possible, with a proper regard for their security. Mulford and Tier were to have the look-out, watch and watch. This was done that no vessel might pass near them unseen, and that any change in the weather might be noted and looked to. As it was, the wind had fallen, and seemed about to vary, though it yet stood in its old quarter, or a little more easterly, perhaps. As a consequence, the drift of the wreck, in so much as it depended on the currents of the air, was more nearly in a line with the direction of the reef, and there was little ground for apprehending that they might be driven further from it in the night. Although that reef offered in reality no place of safety that was available to his party, Mulford felt it as a sort of relief to be certain that it was not distant, possibly influenced by a vague hope that some passing wrecker or turtler might yet pick them up.

The bottom of the schooner and the destitute condition of the party admitted of only very simple arrangements for the night. The females placed themselves against the keel in the best manner they could, and thus endeavored to get a little of the rest they so much needed. The day had been warm, as a matter of course, and the contrast produced by the setting of the sun was at first rather agreeable than otherwise. Luckily Rose had thrown a shawl over her shoulders not long before the vessel capsized, and in this shawl she had been saved. It had been dried, and it now served for a light covering to herself and her aunt, and added essentially to their comfort. As for Biddy, she was far too hardy to need a shawl, and she protested that she should not think of using one, had she been better provided. The patient, meek manner in which that humble, but generous-hearted creature submitted to her fate, and the earnestness with which she had begged that "Miss Rosy" might have her morsel of the portion of the biscuit each received for a supper, had sensibly impressed Mulford in her favor; and knowing how much more necessary food was to sustain one of her robust frame and sturdy habits than to Rose, he had contrived to give the woman, unknown to herself, a double allowance. Nor was it surprising that Biddy did not detect this little act of fraud in her favor, for the double allowance was merely a single mouthful. The want of water had made itself much more keenly felt than the want of food, for as yet anxiety, excitement, and apprehension prevented the appetite from being much awakened, while the claims of thirst were increased rather

than diminished by these very causes. Still, no one had complained, on this or any other account, throughout the whole of the long and weary day which had passed.

Mulford took the first lookout, with the intention of catching a little sleep if possible, during the middle hours of the night, and of returning to his duty as morning approached. For the first hour nothing occurred to divert his attention from brooding on the melancholy circumstances of their situation. It seemed as if all around him had actually lost the sense of their cares in sleep, and no sound was audible amid that ocean waste but the light washing of the water, as the gentle waves rolled at intervals against the weather-side of the wreck. It was now that Mulford found a moment for prayer, and, seated on the keel, he called on the Divine aid, in a fervent but silent petition to God, to put away this trial from the youthful and beautiful Rose, at least, though he himself perished. It was the first prayer that Mulford had made in many months, or since he had joined the *Swash*—a craft in which that duty was very seldom thought of.

A few minutes succeeded this petition, when Biddy spoke.

"Missus—Madam Budd—dear missus," half whispered the Irish woman, anxious not to disturb Rose, who lay furthest from her—"missus, bees ye asleep at sich a time as this?"

"No, Biddy; sleep and I are strangers to each other, and are likely to be till morning. What do you wish to say?"

"Anything is betther than my own t'oughts, missus dear, and I wants to talk to ye. Is it no wather at all they'll give us so long as we stay in this place?"

"There is no one to give it to us but God, poor Biddy, and he alone can say what, in his gracious mercy, it may please him to do. Ah! Biddy, I fear me that I did an unwise and thoughtless thing to bring my poor Rose to such a place as this. Were it to be done over again, the riches of Wall Street would not tempt me to be guilty of so wrong a thing!"

The arm of Rose was thrown around her aunt's neck, and its gentle pressure announced how completely the offender was forgiven.

"I's very sorry for Rose," rejoined Biddy, "and I suffers so much the more meself in thinking how hard it must be for the like of her to be wantin' a swallow of fresh wather."

"Is it no harder for me to bear it, poor Biddy," answered the gentle voice of our heroine, "than it is for yourself."

"It is meself, then? Sure am I, that if I had a quar-r-t of good swate wather from our own pump, and *that's* far betther is it than the crothon, the best day the crothon ever seed—but had I a quar-r-t of it, every dhrap would I give to you, Miss Rose, to app'ase your thirst, I would."

"Water would be a great relief to us all, just now, my excellent Biddy," answered Rose, "and I wish we had but a tumblerful of that you name, to divide equally among the whole five of us."

"Is it divide? Then it would be ag'in dividin' that my voice would be raised, for that same r'ason that the tumbler would never hold as much as you could dhrink yourself, Miss Rose."

"Yet the tumblerful would be a great blessing for us all just now," murmured Mrs. Budd.

"And isn't mutthon good 'aitin', ladies? Och! if I had but a good swate pratie, now, from my own native Ireland, and a dhrap of milk to help wash it down! It's mighty little that a body thinks of sich thrifles when there's abundance of them; but when there's none at all, they get to be stronger in the mind than riches and honors."

"You say the truth, Biddy," rejoined the mistress, "and there is a pleasure in talking of them, if one can't enjoy them. I've been thinking all the afternoon, Rose, what a delicious food is a good roast turkey, with cranberry sauce; and I wonder now that I have not been more grateful for the very many that Providence has bestowed on me in my time. My poor Mr. Budd was passionately fond of mutton, and I used wickedly to laugh at his fondness for it, sometimes,

when he always had his answer ready, and that was, that there are no sheep at sea! How true that is, Rosy, dear! There are, indeed, no sheep at sea!"

"No, aunty," answered Rose's gentle voice from beneath the shawl, "there are no such animals on the ocean, but God is with us here as much as he would be in New York."

A long silence succeeded this simple remark of his well-beloved, and the young mate hoped that there would be no more of a dialogue, every syllable of which was a dagger to his feelings. But nature was stronger than reflection in Mrs. Budd and Biddy, and the latter spoke again, after a pause of near a quarter of an hour.

"Pray for me, missus," she said moaningly, "that I may sleep. A bit of sleep would do a body almost as much good as a bit of bread—I won't say as much as a dhrap of wather."

"Be quiet, Biddy, and we *will* pray for you," answered Rose, who fancied by her breathing that her aunt was about to forget her sufferings for a brief space in broken slumbers.

"Is it for you I'll do *that!* and sure will I, Miss Rose. Niver would I have quitted Ireland, could I have thought there was sich a spot on this earth as a place where no wather was to be had."

This was the last of Biddy's audible complaints for the remainder of this long and anxious watch of Mulford. He then set himself about an arrangement which shall be mentioned in its proper place. At twelve o'clock, or when he thought it was twelve, he called Jack Tier, who in turn called the mate again at four.

"It looks dark and threatening," said Mulford, as he rose to his feet and began to look about him once more, "though there does not appear to be any wind."

"It's a flat calm, Mr. Mate, and the darkness comes from yonder cloud, which seems likely to bring a little rain."

"Rain! Then God is indeed with us here. You are right, Jack; rain must fall from that cloud. We must catch some of it, if it be only a drop to cool Rose's parched tongue."

"In what?" answered Tier, gloomily. "She may wring her clothes when the shower is over, and in that way get a drop. I see no other method."

"I have bethought me of all that, and passed most of my watch in making the preparations."

Mulford then showed Tier what he had been about, in the long and solitary hours of the first watch. It would seem that the young man had dug a little trench with his knife, along the schooner's bottom, commencing two or three feet from the keel, and near the spot where Rose was lying, and carrying it as far as was convenient toward the run, until he reached a point where he had dug out a sort of reservoir to contain the precious fluid, should any be sent them by Providence. While doing this, there were no signs of rain; but the young man knew that a shower alone could save them from insanity, if not from death; and in speculating on the means of profiting by one, should it come, he had bethought him of this expedient. The large knife of a seaman had served him a good turn in carrying on his work, to complete which there remained now very little to do, and that was in enlarging the receptacle for the water. The hole was already big enough to contain a pint, and it might easily be sufficiently enlarged to hold double that quantity.

Jack was no sooner made acquainted with what had been done, than he out knife and commenced tearing splinter after splinter from the planks to help enlarge the reservoir. This could only be done by cutting on the surface, for the wood was not three inches in thickness, and the smallest hole *through* the plank would have led to the rapid escape of the air, and to the certain sinking of the wreck. It required a good deal of judgment to preserve the necessary level also, and Mulford was obliged to interfere more than once to prevent his companion from doing more harm than good. He succeeded, however, and actually made a cavity that might contain more than a quart of water, when the first large drop fell from the heavens. This cavity was not a hole, but a long, deep trench—deep

for the circumstances—so nicely cut on the proper level, as to admit of its holding a fluid in the quantity mentioned.

"Rose—dearest—rise, and be ready to drink," said Mulford, tenderly disturbing the uneasy slumbers of his beloved. "It is about to rain, and God is with us here as he might be on land."

"Wather!" exclaimed Biddy, who was awakened with the same call. "What a blessed thing is good swate wather, and sure am I we ought all to be thankful that there is such a precious gift in the wor-r-ld!"

"Come, then," said Mulford, hurriedly, "it will soon rain—I hear it pattering on the sea. Come hither, all of you, and drink, as a merciful God furnishes the means."

This summons was not likely to be neglected. All rose in haste, and the word "water" was murmured from every lip. Biddy had less self-command than the others, and she was heard saying aloud' "Och! didn't I dhrame of the blessed springs and wells of Ireland the night, and haven't I dhrunk at 'em all? But now it's over, and I'm awake, no good has't done me, and I'm ready to die for one dhrap of wather."

That drop soon came, however, and with it the blessed relief which such a boon bestows. Mulford had barely time to explain his arrangements, and to place the party, on their knees, along his little reservoir and the gutter which led to it, when the pattering of the rain advanced along the sea, with a deep rushing sound. Presently, the uplifted faces and open mouths caught a few heavy, straggling drops, to cool the parched tongues, when the water came tumbling down upon them in a thousand little streams. There was scarcely any wind, and merely the skirt of a large black cloud floated over the wreck, on which the rain fell barely one minute. But it fell as rain comes down within the tropics, and in sufficient quantities for all present purposes. Everybody drank and found relief; and, when all was over, Mulford ascertained by examination that his receptacle for the fluid was still full to overflowing. The abstinence had not been of sufficient length, nor the quantity taken of large enough amount, to produce injury, though the thirst was generally and temporarily appeased. It is probable that the coolness of the hour, day dawning as the cloud moved past, and the circumstance that the sufferers were wetted to their skins, contributed to the change.

"Och, blessed, blessed wather! exclaimed Biddy, as she rose from her knees; America, afther all, isn't as dhry a country as some say. I've niver tasted swater wather in Ireland itself!"

Rose murmured her thanksgiving in more appropriate language. A few exclamations also escaped Mrs. Budd, and Jack Tier had his sententious eulogy on the precious qualities of sweet water.

The wind rose as the day advanced, and a swell began to heave the wreck with a power that had hitherto been dormant. Mulford understood this to be a sign that there had been a blow at some distance from them, that had thrown the sea into a state of agitation which extended itself beyond the influence of the wind. Eagerly did the young mate examine the horizon, as the curtain of night arose, inch by inch, as it might be, on the watery panorama, in the hope that a vessel of some sort or other might be brought within the view. Nor was he wholly disappointed. The strange sail seen the previous evening was actually there; and what was more, so near as to allow her hull to be distinctly visible. It was a ship, under her square canvas, standing from between divided portions of the reef, as if getting to the northward, in order to avoid the opposing current of the Gulf Stream. Vessels bound to Mobile, New Orleans, and other ports along the coast of the republic, in that quarter of the ocean, often did this; and when the young mate first caught glimpses of the shadowy outline of this ship, he supposed it to be some packet, or cotton-droger, standing for her port on the northern shore. But a few minutes removed the veil, and with it the error of his notion. A seaman could no longer mistake the craft. Her length, her square and massive hamper, with the symmetry of her spars, and the long,

straight outline of the hull, left no doubt that it was a cruiser, with her hammocks unstowed. Mulford now cheerfully announced to his companions, that the ship they so plainly saw, scarcely a gunshot distant from them, was the sloop-of-war which had already become a sort of acquaintance.

"If we can succeed in making them see our signal," cried Mulford, "all will yet be well. Come Jack, and help me put abroad this shawl, the only ensign we can show."

The shawl of Rose was the signal spread. Tier and Mulford stood on the keel, and holding opposite corners, let the rest of the cloth blow out with the wind. For near an hour did these two extend their arms, and try all possible expedients to make their signal conspicuous. But unfortunately, the wind blew directly toward the cruiser, and instead of exposing a surface of any breadth to the vision of those on board her, it must, at most, have offered little more than a flitting, waving line.

As the day advanced, sail was made on the cruiser. She had stood through the passage, in which she had been becalmed most of the night, under short canvas; but now she threw out fold after fold of her studding-sails, and moved away to the westward, with the stately motion of a ship before the wind. No sooner had she got far enough to the northward of the reef, than she made a deviation from her course as first seen, turning her stern entirely to the wreck, and rapidly becoming less and less distinct to the eyes of those who floated on it.

Mulford saw the hopelessness of their case, as it respected relief from this vessel; still, he persevered in maintaining his position on the keel, tossing and waving the shawl, in all the variations that his ingenuity could devise. He well knew, however, that their chances of being seen would have been trebled could they have been ahead instead of astern of the ship. Mariners have few occasions to look behind them, while a hundred watchful eyes are usually turned ahead, more especially when running near rocks and shoals. Mrs. Budd wept like an infant when she saw the sloop-of-war gliding away, reaching a distance that rendered sight useless in detecting an object that floated as low on the water as the wreck. As for Biddy, unable to control her feelings, the poor creature actually called to the crew of the departing vessel, as if her voice had the power to make itself heard, at a distance which already exceeded two leagues. It was only by means of the earnest remonstrances of Rose, that the faithful creature could be quieted.

"Why will ye not come to our relaif?" she cried at the top of her voice. "Here we are, helpless as new-born babies, and ye sailing away from us in a conthrary way! D'ye not bethink you of the missus, who is much of a sailor, but not sich a one as to sail on a wrack; and poor Miss Rose, who is the char-rm and delight of all eyes. Only come and take off Miss Rose, and lave the rest of us, if ye so likes; for it's a sin and a shame to lave the likes of her to die in the midst of the ocean, as if she were no better nor a fish. Then it will be soon that we shall ag'in feel the want of wather, and that, too, with nothing but wather to be seen on all sides of us."

"It is of no use," said Harry, mournfully, stepping down from the keel, and laying aside the shawl. "They cannot see us, and the distance is now so great as to render it certain they never will. There is only one hope left. We are evidently set to and fro by the tides, and it is possible that by keeping in or near this passage, some other craft may appear, and we be more fortunate. The relief of the rain is a sign that we are not forgotten by Divine Providence, and with such a protector we ought not to despair."

A gloomy and scanty breaking of the fast succeeded. Each person had one large mouthful of bread, which was all that prudence would authorize Mulford to distribute. He attempted a pious fraud, however, by placing his own allowance along with that of Rose's, under the impression that her strength might not endure privation as well as his own. But the tender solicitude of Rose was not to be

thus deceived. Judging of his wishes and motives by her own, she at once detected the deception, and insisted on retaining no more than her proper share. When this distribution was completed, and the meager allowance taken, only sufficient bread remained to make one more similar scanty meal, if meal a single mouthful could be termed. As for the water, a want of which would be certain to be felt as soon as the sun obtained its noonday power, the shawl was extended over it, in a way to prevent evaporation as much as possible, and at the same time to offer some resistance to the fluid's being washed from its shallow receptacle by the motion of the wreck, which was sensibly increasing with the increase of the wind and waves.

Mulford had next an anxious duty to perform. Throughout the whole of the preceding day he had seen the air escaping from the hull, in an incessant succession of small bubbles, which were formidable through their numbers, if not through their size. The mate was aware that this unceasing loss of the buoyant property of the wreck must eventually lead to their destruction, should no assistance come, and he had marked the floating line, on the bottom of the vessel with his knife, ere darkness set in, on the previous evening. No sooner did his thoughts recur to this fact, after the excitement of the first hour of daylight was over, than he stepped to the different places thus marked, and saw, with an alarm that it would be difficult to describe, that the wreck had actually sunk into the water several inches within the last few hours. This was, indeed, menacing their security in a most serious manner, setting a limit to their existence, which rendered all precaution on the subject of food and water useless. By the calculations of the mate, the wreck could not float more than eight-and-forty hours, should it continue to lose the air at the rate at which it had been hitherto lost. Bad as all this appeared, things were fated to become much more serious. The motion of the water quite sensibly increased, lifting the wreck at times in a way greatly to increase the danger of their situation. The reader will understand, this movement did not proceed from the waves of the existing wind, but from what is technically called a ground-swell, or the long, heavy undulations that are left by the tempest that is past, or by some distant gale. The waves of the present breeze were not very formidable, the reef making a lee; though they might possibly become inconvenient from breaking on the weather side of the wreck, as soon as the drift carried the latter fairly abreast of the passage already mentioned. But the dangers that proceeded from the heavy ground-swell, which now began to give a considerable motion to the wreck, will best explain itself by narrating the incidents as they occurred.

Harry had left his marks, and had taken his seat on the keel at Rose's side, impatiently waiting for any turn that Providence might next give to their situation, when a heavy roll of the wreck first attracted his attention to this new circumstance.

"If any one is thirsty," he observed quietly, "he or she had better drink now, while it may be done. Two or three more such rolls as this last will wash all the water from our gutters."

"Wather is a blessed thing," said Biddy, with a longing expression of the eyes, "and it would be betther to swallow it than to let it be lost."

"Then drink, for heaven's sake, good woman—it may be the last occasion that will offer."

"Sure am I that I would not touch a dhrap, while the missus and Miss Rosy was a-sufferin'."

"I have no thirst at all," answered Rose, sweetly, "and have already taken more water than was good for me, with so little food on my stomach."

"Eat another morsel of bread, beloved," whispered Harry, in a manner so urgent that Rose gratefully complied. "Drink, Biddy, and we will come and share with you before the water is wasted by this increasing motion."

Biddy did as desired, and each knelt in turn and took a little of the grateful fluid, leaving about a gill in the gutters for the

use of those whose lips might again become parched.

"Wather is a blessed thing," repeated Biddy, for the twentieth time—"a blessed, blessed thing is wather!"

A little scream from Mrs. Budd, which was dutifully taken up by the maid, interrupted the speech of the latter, and every eye was turned on Mulford, as if to ask an explanation of the groaning sound that had been heard within the wreck. The young mate comprehended only too well. The rolling of the wreck had lifted a portion of the open hatchway above the undulating surface of the sea and a large quantity of the pent air within the hold had escaped in a body. The entrance of water to supply the vacuum had produced the groan. Mulford had made new marks on the vessel's bottom with his knife, and he stepped down to them, anxious and nearly heart-broken, to note the effect. That one surging of the wreck had permitted air enough to escape to lower it in the water several inches. As yet, however, the visible limits of their floating foundation had not been sufficiently reduced to attract the attention of the females; and the young man said nothing on the subject. He thought that Jack Tier was sensible of the existence of this new source of danger, but if he was, that experienced mariner imitated his own reserve and made no allusion to it. Thus passed the day. Occasionally the wreck rolled heavily, when more air escaped, the hull settling lower and lower in the water as a necessary consequence. The little bubbles continued incessantly to rise, and Mulford became satisfied that another day must decide their fate.

Taking this view of their situation, he saw no use in reserving their food, but encouraged his companions to share the whole of what remained at sunset. Little persuasion was necessary, and when night once more came to envelop them in darkness, not a mouthful of food or a drop of water remained to meet the necessities of the coming morn. It had rained again for a short time in the course of the afternoon, when enough water had been caught to allay their thirst, and what was almost of as much importance to the females now, a sufficiency of sun had succeeded to dry their clothes, thus enabling them to sleep without enduring the chilling damps that might otherwise have prevented it. The wind had sensibly fallen, and the groundswell was altogether gone, but Mulford was certain the relief had come too late. So much air had escaped while it lasted as scarce to leave him the hope that the wreck could float until morning. The rising of the bubbles was now incessant, the crevices by which they escaped having most probably opened a little, in consequence of the pressure and the unceasing action of the currents, small as the latter were.

Just as darkness was shutting around them for the second time, Rose remarked to Mulford that it seemed to her that they had not as large a space for their little world as when they were first placed on it. The mate, however, successfully avoided an explanation; and when the watch was again set for the night, the females lay down to seek their repose, more troubled with apprehensions for a morrow of hunger and thirst, than by any just fears that might so well have arisen from the physical certainty that the body which alone kept them from being ingulfed in the sea could float but a few hours longer. This night Tier kept the lookout until Jupiter reached the zenith, when Mulford was called to hold the watch until daybreak.

It may seem singular that any could sleep at all in such a situation. But we get accustomed, in an incredibly short time, to the most violent changes; and calamities that seem insupportable, when looked at from a distance, lose half their power if met and resisted with fortitude. The last may, indeed, be too insignificant a word to be applied to all of the party on the wreck, on the occasion of which we are writing, though no one of them all betrayed fears that were troublesome. Of Mulford it is unnecessary to speak. His deportment had been quiet, thoughtful, and full of a manly interest in the comfort of others, from the first moment of the calamity. That Rose should share the largest in his attentions was natural

enough, but he neglected no essential duty to her companions. Rose herself had little hope of being rescued. Her naturally courageous character, however, prevented any undue exhibitions of despair, and now it was that the niece became the principal support of the aunt, completely changing the relations that had formerly existed between them. Mrs. Budd had lost all the little buoyancy of her mind. Not a syllable did she now utter concerning ships and their maneuvers. She had been, at first, a little disposed to be querulous and despairing but the soothing and pious conversation of Rose awakened a certain degree of resolution in her, and habit soon exercised its influence over even her inactive mind. Biddy was a strange mixture of courage despair, humility, and consideration for others. Not once had she taken her small allowance of food without first offering it, and that, too, in perfect good faith, to her "Missus and Miss Rosy;" yet her moanings for this sort of support, and her complaints of bodily suffering, much exceeded that of all the rest of the party put together. As for Jack Tier, his conduct singularly belied his appearance. No one would have expected any great show of manly resolution from the little rotund, lymphatic figure of Tier; but he had manifested a calmness that denoted either great natural courage, or a resolution derived from familiarity with danger. In this particular, even Mulford regarded his deportment with surprise, not unmingled with respect.

"You have had a tranquil watch, Jack," said Harry, when he was called by the person named, and had fairly aroused himself from his slumbers. "Has the wind stood as it is since sunset?"

"No change whatever, sir. It has blowed a good working breeze the whole watch, and what is surprising, not as much lipper has got up as would frighten a colt on a sea-beach."

"We must be near the reef, by that. I think the only currents we feel come from the tide, and they seem to be setting us back and forth, instead of carrying us in any one settled direction."

"Quite likely, sir; and this makes my opinion of what I saw an hour since all the more probable."

"What you saw! In the name of a merciful Providence, Tier, do not trifle with me! Has anything been seen near by?"

"Don't talk to me of your liquors and other drinks," murmured Biddy, in her sleep. "It's wather that is a blessed thing, and I wish I lived, the night and the day, by the swate pump that's in our own yard, I do."

"The woman has been talking in her sleep, in this fashion, most of the watch," observed Jack, coolly, and perhaps a little contemptuously. "But, Mr. Mulford, unless my eyes have cheated me, we are near that boat again. The passage through the reef is close aboard here, on our larboard bow, as it might be, and the current has sucked us in it in a fashion to bring it in a sort of athwart-hawse direction to us."

"If that boat, after all, should be sent by Providence to our relief! How long is it since you saw it, Jack?"

"But a bit since, sir; or for that matter, I think I see it now. Look hereaway, sir; just where the dead-eyes of the forerigging would bear from us, if the craft stood upon her legs, as she ought to do. If that isn't a boat, it's a rock out of water."

Mulford gazed through the gloom of midnight, and saw, or fancied he saw, an object that might really be the boat. It could not be very distant, either; and his mind was instantly made up as to the course he would pursue. Should it actually turn out to be that which he now so much hoped for, and its distance in the morning did not prove too great for human powers, he was resolved to swim for it at the hazard of his life. In the meantime, or until light should return, there remained nothing to do but to exercise as much patience as could be summoned, and to confide in God, soliciting his powerful succor by secret prayer.

Mulford was no sooner left alone, as it might be, by Tier's seeking a place in which to take his rest, than he again ex-

amined the state of the wreck. Little as he had hoped from its long-continued buoyancy, he found matters even worse than he apprehended they would be. The hull had lost much air, and had consequently sunk in the water in an exact proportion to this loss. The space that was actually above the water was reduced to an area not more than six or seven feet in one direction, by some ten or twelve in the other. This was reducing its extent, since the evening previous, by fully one-half; and there could be no doubt that the air was escaping, in consequence of the additional pressure, in a ratio that increased by a sort of arithmetical progression. The young man knew that the whole wreck, under its peculiar circumstances, might sink entirely beneath the surface, and yet possess sufficient buoyancy to sustain those who were on it for a time longer, but this involved the terrible necessity of leaving the females partly submerged themselves.

Our mate heard his own heart beat as he became satisfied of the actual condition of the wreck, and of the physical certainty that existed of its sinking, at least to the point last mentioned, ere the sun came to throw its glories over the last view that the sufferers would be permitted to take of the face of day. It appeared to him that no time was to be lost. There lay the dim and shapless object that seemed to be the boat, distant, as he thought, about a mile. It would not have been visible at all but for the perfect smoothness of the sea, and the low position occupied by the observer. At times it did disappear altogether, when it would rise again, as if undulating in the ground-swell. This last circumstance, more than any other, persuaded Harry that it was not a rock, but some floating object that he beheld. Thus encouraged, he delayed no longer. Every moment was precious, and all might be lost by indecision. He did not like the appearance of deserting his companions, but should he fail, the motive would appear in the act. Should he fail, every one would alike soon be beyond the reach of censure, and in a state of being that would do full justice to all.

Harry threw off most of his clothes, reserving only his shirt and a pair of light summer trousers. He could not quit the wreck, however, without taking a sort of leave of Rose. On no account would he awake her, for he appreciated the agony she would feel during the period of his struggles. Kneeling at her side, he made a short prayer, then pressed his lips to her warm cheek, and left her. Rose murmured his name at that instant, but it was as the innocent and young betray their secrets in their slumbers. Neither of the party awoke.

It was a moment to prove the heart of man, that in which Harry Mulford, in the darkness of midnight, alone. unsustained by any encouraging eye, or approving voice, with no other aid than his own stout arm, and the unknown designs of a mysterious Providence committed his form to the sea. For an instant he paused, after he had waded down on the wreck to the spot where the water already mounted to his breast; but it was not in misgivings. He calculated the chances, and made an intelligent use of such assistance as could be had. There had been no sharks near the wreck that day, but a splash in the water might bring them back again in a crowd. They were probably prowling over the reef, near at hand. The mate used great care, therefore, to make no noise. There was the distant object, and he set it by a bright star, that wanted about an hour before it would sink beneath the horizon. That star was his beacon, and muttering a few words in earnest prayer, the young man threw his body forward, and left the wreck, swimming lightly, but with vigor.

CHAPTER IX.

"The night has been unruly; where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death;
And prophesying, with accents terrible,
Of dire combustion, and confused events,
New hatch'd to the woful time."—MACBETH.

IT is seldom that man is required to make an exertion as desperate and appal-

ling in all its circumstances as that on which Harry Mulford was now bent. The night was starlight, it was true, and it was possible to see objects near by with tolerable distinctness; still, it was midnight, and the gloom of that hour rested on the face of the sea, lending its solemn mystery and obscurity to the other trying features of the undertaking. Then there was the uncertainty whether it was the boat at all, of which he was in pursuit; and, if the boat, it might drift away from him as fast as he could follow it. Nevertheless, the perfect conviction that, without some early succor, the party on the wreck, including Rose Budd, must inevitably perish, stimulated him to proceed, and a passing feeling of doubt, touching the prudence of his course, that came over the young mate, when he was a few yards from the wreck, vanished under a vivid renewal of this last conviction. On he swam, therefore, riveting his eye on the "thoughtful star" that guided his course, and keeping his mind as tranquil as possible, in order that the exertions of his body might be the easier.

Mulford was an excellent swimmer. The want of food was a serious obstacle to his making one of his best efforts, but, as yet, he was not very sensible of any great loss of strength. Understanding fully the necessity of swimming easily, if he would swim long, he did not throw out all his energy at first, but made the movements of his limbs as regular, continued, and skillful as possible. No strength was thrown away, and his progress was in proportion to the prudence of this manner of proceeding. For some twenty minutes he held on his course in this way, when he began to experience a little of that weariness which is apt to accompany an unremitted use of the same set of muscles in a monotonous and undeviating mode. Accustomed to all the resources of his art, he turned on his back, for the double purpose of relieving his arms for a minute, and of getting a glimpse of the wreck, if possible, in order to ascertain the distance he had overcome. Swim long in this new manner, however, he could not with prudence, as the star was necessary in order to keep the direct line of his course.

It may be well to explain to some of our readers that, though the surface of the ocean may be like glass, as sometimes really happens, it is never absolutely free from the long, undulating motion that is known by the name of a "ground-swell." This swell, on the present occasion, was not very heavy, but it was sufficient to place our young mate, at moments, between two dark mounds of water, that limited his view in either direction to some eighty or a hundred yards, then it raised him on the summit of a rounded wave, that enabled him to see far as his eye could reach under that obscure light. Profiting by this advantage, Mulford now looked behind him in quest of the wreck, but uselessly. It might have been in the trough while he was thus on the summit of the waves, or it might be that it floated so low as to be totally lost to the view of one whose head was scarcely above the surface of the water. For a single instant the young man felt a chill at his heart, as he fancied that the wreck had already sunk; but it passed away when he recalled the slow progress by which the air escaped, and he saw the certainty that the catastrophe, however inevitable, could not yet have really arrived. He waited for another swell to lift him on its summit, when, by "treading water," he raised his head and shoulders fairly above the surface of the sea, and strained his eyes in another vain effort to catch a glimpse of the wreck. He could not see it. In point of fact, the mate had swam much further than he had supposed, and was already so distant as to render any such attempt hopeless. He was fully a third of a mile distant from the point of his departure.

Disappointed, and in a slight degree disheartened, Mulford turned and swam in the direction of the sinking star. He now looked anxiously for the boat. It was time it came more plainly into view, and a new source of anxiety beset him as he could discover no signs of its vicinity. Certain that he was on the course, after making a due allowance for the direction

of the wind, the stout-hearted young man swam on. He next determined not to annoy himself by fruitless searches or vain regrets, but to swim steadily for a certain time, a period long enough to carry him a material distance ere he again looked for the object of his search.

For twenty minutes longer did that courageous and active youth struggle with the waste of waters amid the obscurity and solitude of midnight. He now believed himself near a mile from the wreck, and the star which had so long served him for a beacon was getting near to the horizon. He took a new observation of another of the heavenly bodies nigh it to serve him in its stead when it should disappear altogether, and then he raised himself in the water and looked about again for the boat. The search was in vain. No boat was near him, of a certainty, and the dreadful apprehension began to possess his mind of perishing uselessly in that waste of gloomy waters. While thus gazing about him, turning his eyes in every quarter, hoping intently to catch some glimpse of the much-desired object in the gloom, he saw two dark, pointed objects that resembled small stakes in the water within twenty feet of him. Mulford knew them at a glance, and a cold shudder passed through his frame as he recognized them. They were, out of all question, the fins of an enormous shark; an animal that could not measure less than eighteen or twenty feet in length.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that when our young mate discovered the proximity of this dangerous animal, situated as he was, he gave himself up for lost. He possessed his knife, however, and had heard of the manner in which even sharks were overcome, and that too in their own element, by the skillful and resolute. At first he was resolved to make one desperate effort for life, before he submitted to a fate so horrible as that which now menaced him; but the movements of his dangerous neighbor induced him to wait. It did not approach any nearer, but continued swimming back and fro on the surface of the water, according to the known habits of the fish, as if watching his own movements. There being no time to be wasted, our young man turned on his face and began again to swim in the direction of the setting star, though nearly chilled by despair. For ten minutes longer did he struggle on, beginning to feel exhaustion, however, and always accompanied by those two dark, sharp, and gliding fins. There was no difficulty in knowing the position of the animal, and Mulford's eyes were oftener on those fins than on the beacon before him.

Strange as it may appear, he actually became accustomed to the vicinity of this formidable creature, and soon felt his presence a sort of relief against the dreadful solitude of his situation. He had been told by seamen of instances, and had once witnessed a case himself, in which a shark had attended a swimming man for a long distance, either forbearing to do him harm from repletion, or influenced by that awe which Nature has instilled into all of the inferior for the highest animal of the creation. He began to think that he was thus favored, and really regarded the shark as a friendly neighbor rather than a voracious foe. In this manner did the two proceed nearly another third of a mile, the fins sometimes in sight ahead, gliding hither and thither, and sometimes out of view behind the swimmer, leaving him in dreadful doubts as to the movements of the fish, when Mulford suddenly felt something hard hit his foot. Believing it to be the shark, dipping for his prey, a slight exclamation escaped him. At the next instant both feet hit the unknown substance again, and he stood erect, the water no higher than his waist! Quick, and comprehending everything connected with the sea, the young man at once understood that he was on a part of the reef where the water was so shallow as to admit of his wading.

Mulford felt that he had been providentially rescued from death. His strength had been about to fail him when he was thus led, unknown to himself, to a spot where his life might yet be possibly prolonged for a few more hours, or days. He had leisure to look about him, and to re-

flect on what was next to be done. Almost unwittingly, he turned in quest of his terrible companion, in whose voracious mouth he had actually believed himself about to be immolated, a few seconds before. There the two horn-like fins were still, gliding about above the water, and indicating the smallest movement of their formidable owner. The mate observed that they went a short distance ahead of him, describing nearly a semicircle, and then returned, doing the same thing in his rear, repeating the movements incessantly, keeping always on his right. This convinced him that shoaler water existed on his left hand, and he waded in that direction, until he reached a small spot of naked rock.

For a time, at least, he was safe! The fragment of coral on which the mate now stood was irregular in shape, but might have contained a hundred feet square in superficial measurement, and was so little raised above the level of the water as not to be visible, even by daylight, at the distance of a hundred yards. Mulford found it was perfectly dry, however, an important discovery to him, as by a close calculation he had made of the tides, since quitting the Dry Tortugas, he knew it must be near high water. Could he even have this small portion of bare rock secure, it made him, for the moment, rich as the most extensive landholder living. A considerable quantity of sea-weed had lodged on the rock, and, as most of this was quite dry, it convinced the young sailor that the place was usually bare. But, though most of the sea-weed was dry, there were portions of the more recent accessions there that still lay in, or quite near to the water, which formed exceptions. In handling these weeds, in order to ascertain the facts, Mulford caught a small shell-fish, and finding it fresh and easy to open, he swallowed it with the eagerness of a famishing man. Never had food proved half so grateful to him as that single swallow of a very palatable testaceous animal. By feeling further he found several others of the same family, and made quite as large a meal as, under the circumstances, was probably good for him. Then, grateful for his escape, but overcome by fatigue, he hastily arranged a bed of sea-weed, drew a portion of the plant over his body, to keep him warm, and fell into a deep sleep that lasted for hours.

Mulford did not regain consciousness until the rays of the rising sun fell upon his eyelids, and the genial warmth of the great luminary shed its benign influence over his frame. At first his mind was confused, and it required a few seconds to bring a perfect recollection of the past and a true understanding of his real situation. They came, however, and the young man moved to the highest part of his little domain, and cast an anxious, hurried look around in quest of the wreck. A knowledge of the course in which he had swum, aided by the position of the sun, told him on what part of the naked waste to look for the object he sought. God had not yet forsaken them! There was the wreck; or, it might be more exact to say, there were those whom the remaining buoyancy of the wreck still upheld from sinking into the depths of the Gulf. In point of fact, but a very little of the bottom of the vessel actually remained above water, some two or three yards square at most, and that little was what seamen term nearly awash. Two or three hours must bury that small portion of the still naked wood beneath the surface of the sea, though sufficient buoyancy might possibly remain for the entire day still to keep the living from death.

There the wreck was, however, yet floating; and, though not visible to Mulford, with a small portion of it above water. He saw the four persons only; and what was more, they saw him. This was evidenced by Jack Tier's waving his hat, like a man cheering. When Mulford returned this signal, the shawl of Rose was tossed into the air, in a way to leave no doubt that he was seen and known. The explanation of this early recognition and discovery of the young mate was very simple. Tier was not asleep when Harry left the wreck, though, seeing the importance of the step the other was taking, he had feigned to be

so. When Rose awoke, missed her lover, and was told what had happened, her heart was kept from sinking by his encouraging tale and hopes. An hour of agony had succeeded, nevertheless, when light returned, and no Mulford was to be seen. The despair that burst upon the heart of our heroine was followed by the joy of discovering him on the rock.

It is scarcely necessary to say how much the parties were relieved on ascertaining their respective positions. Faint as were the hopes of each of eventual delivery, the two or three minutes that succeeded seemed to be minutes of perfect happiness. After this rush of unlooked-for joy, Mulford continued his intelligent examination of surrounding objects.

The wreck was fully half a mile from the rock of the mate, but much nearer to the reef than it had been the previous night. "Could it but ground on the rocks," thought the young man, "it would be a most blessed event." The thing was possible, though the first half hour of his observations told him that its drift was in the direction of the open passage so often named, rather than toward the nearest rocks. Still, that drift brought Rose each minute nearer and nearer to himself again. In looking round, however, the young man saw the boat. It was a quarter of a mile distant, with open water between them, apparently grounded on a rock, for it was more within the reef than he was himself. He must have passed it in the dark, and the boat had been left to obey the wind and currents, and to drift to the spot where it then lay.

Mulford shouted aloud when he saw the boat, and at once determined to swim in quest of it, as soon as he had collected a little refreshment from among the seaweed. On taking a look at his rock by daylight, he saw that its size was quadrupled to the eye by the falling of the tide, and that water was lying in several of the cavities of its uneven surface. At first he supposed this to be sea-water, left by the flood; but, reflecting a moment, he remembered the rain, and hoped it might be possible that one little cavity, containing two or three gallons of the fluid, would turn out fresh. Kneeling beside it, he applied his lips in feverish haste, and drank the sweetest draught that had ever passed his lips. Slaking his thirst, which had begun again to be painfully severe, he arose with a heart overflowing with gratitude—could he only get Rose to that narrow and barren rock it would be an earthly paradise. Mulford next made his scanty but all things considered, sufficient meal, drank moderately afterward, and then turned his attention and energies toward the boat, which, though now aground and fast, might soon float on the rising tide, and drift once more beyond his reach. It was his first intention to swim directly for his object; but, just when about to enter the water, he saw with horror the fins of at least a dozen sharks, which were prowling about in the deeper water of the reef, and almost encircling his hold. To throw himself in the midst of such enemies would be madness, and he stopped to reflect, and again to look about him.

For the first time that morning, he took a survey of the entire horizon, to see if anything were in sight; for, hitherto, his thoughts had been too much occupied with Rose and her companions to remember anything else. To the northward and westward he distinctly saw the upper sails of a large ship, that was standing on a wind to the northward and eastward. As there was no port to which a vessel of that character would be likely to be bound in the quarter of the Gulf to which such a course would lead, Mulford at once inferred it was the sloop-of-war, which, after having examined the islets at the Dry Tortugas, and finding them deserted, was beating up either to go into Key West, or to pass to the southward of the reef again, by the passage through which she had come as lately as the previous day. This was highly encouraging; and could he only get to the boat, and remove the party from the wreck before it sunk, there was now every prospect of a final escape.

To the southward, also, the mate fancied he saw a sail. It was probably a much smaller vessel than the ship in the

northwest, and at a greater distance. It might, however, be the lofty sails of some large craft, standing along the reef, going westward, bound to New Orleans, or to that new and important port, Point Isabel; or it might be some wrecker, or other craft, edging away into the passage. As it was, it appeared only as a speck in the horizon, and was too far off to offer much prospect of succor.

Thus acquainted with the state of things around him, Mulford gave his attention seriously to his duties. He was chiefly afraid that the returning tide might lift the boat from the rock on which it had grounded, and that it would float beyond his reach. Then there was the frightful and ever-increasing peril of the wreck, and the dreadful fate that so inevitably menaced those that it held, were not relief prompt. This thought goaded him nearly to desperation, and he felt at moments almost ready to plunge into the midst of the sharks and fight his way to his object.

But reflection showed him a less hazardous way of making an effort to reach the boat. The sharks' fins described a semicircle only, as had been the case of his single attendant during the night, and he thought that the shoalness of the water prevented their going further than they did in a southeasterly direction, which was that of the boat. He well knew that a shark required sufficient water to sink beneath its prey, ere it made its swoop, and that it uniformly turned on its back, and struck upwards whenever it gave one of its voracious bites. This was owing to the greater length of its upper than of its lower jaw, and Mulford had heard it was a physical necessity of its formation. Right or wrong, he determined to act on this theory, and began at once to wade along the part of the reef that his enemies seemed unwilling to approach.

Had our young mate a weapon of any sort larger than his knife he would have felt greater confidence in his success. As it was, however, he drew that knife, and was prepared to sell his life dearly should a foe assail him. No sooner was his step heard in the water than the whole group of sharks were set in violent motion, glancing past, and frequently quite near him, as if aware their intended prey was about to escape. Had the water deepened much, Harry would have returned at once, for a conflict with such numbers would have been hopeless; but it did not; on the contrary, it shoaled again, after a very short distance, at which it had been waist deep, and Mulford found himself wading over a long, broad surface of rock and that directly toward the boat, through water that seldom rose above his knees, and which occasionally scarce covered his feet. There was no absolutely naked rock near him, but there seemed to be acres of that which might be almost said to be awash. Amid the greedy throng that endeavored to accompany him, the mate even fancied he recognized the enormous fins of his old companion, who sailed to and fro in the crowd in a stately manner, as if merely a curious looker-on of his own movements. It was the smaller, and probably the younger sharks, that betrayed the greatest hardihood and voracity. One or two of these made fierce swoops toward Harry, as if bent on having him at every hazard; but they invariably glided off when they found their customary mode of attack resisted by the shoalness of the water.

Our young mate got ahead but slowly, being obliged to pay a cautious attention to the movements of his escort. Sometimes he was compelled to wade up to his arms in order to cross narrow places, that he might get on portions of the rock that were nearly bare; and once he was actually compelled to swim eight or ten yards. Nevertheless, he did get on, and after an hour of this sort of work, he found himself within a hundred yards of the boat, which lay grounded near a low piece of naked rock, but separated from it by a channel of deep water, into which all the sharks rushed in a body, as if expressly to cut off his escape. Mulford now paused to take breath, and to consider what ought to be done. On the spot where he stood he was quite safe; though ankle-deep in the sea, the shallow water extending to a considerable distance on all sides of him, with the single exception of the channel in his front. He stood on the

very verge of that channel, and could see, in the pellucid element before him, that it was deep enough to float a vessel of some size.

To venture into the midst of twenty sharks required desperation, and Harry was not yet reduced to that. He had been so busy in making his way to the point where he stood as to have no leisure to look for the wreck; but he now turned his eyes in quest of that all-interesting object. He saw the shawl fluttering in the breeze, and that was all he could see. Tier had contrived to keep it flying as a signal were he was to be found, but the hull of the schooner had sunk so low in the water, that they who were seated on its keel were not visible, even at the short distance which now separated them from Mulford. Encouraged by this signal, and animated by the revived hope of still saving his companions, Harry turned toward the channel, half inclined to face every danger rather than to wait any longer. At that moment the fins were all gliding along the channel from him, and in the same direction. Some object drew the sharks away in a body, and the young mate let himself easily into the water, and swam as noiselessly as he could toward the boat.

It was a fearful trial, but Mulford felt that everything depended on his success. Stimulated by his motive and strengthened by the food and water taken an hour before, never had he shown so much skill and power in the water. In an incredibly short period he was half-way across the channel, still swimming strong and unharmed. A few strokes more sent him so near the boat that hope took full possession of his soul, and he shouted in exultation. That indiscreet but natural cry, uttered so near the surface of the sea, turned every shark upon him, as the pack springs at the fox in view. Mulford was conscious of the folly of his cry the instant it escaped him, and involuntarily he turned his head to note the effect on his enemies. Every fin was gliding toward him—a dark array of swift and furious foes. Ten thousand bayonets, leveled in their line, could not have been one half as terrible, and the efforts of the young man became nearly frantic. But strong as he was, and ready in the element, what is the movement of a man in the water compared to that of a vigorous and voracious fish? Mulford could see those fins coming on like a tempest, and he had just given up all hope, and was feeling his flesh creep with terror when his foot hit the rock. Giving himself an onward plunge, he threw his body upward toward the boat, and into so much shoaler water, at least a dozen feet by that single effort. Recovering his legs as soon as possible, he turned to look behind him. The water seemed alive with fins, each pair gliding back and forth, as the bulldog bounds in front of the ox's muzzle. Just then a light-colored object glanced past the young man, so near as almost to touch him. It was a shark that had actually turned on his back to seize its prey, and was only prevented from succeeding by being driven from the line of its course by hitting the slimy rock, over which it was compelled to make its plunge. The momentum with which it came on, added to the inclination of the rock, forced the head and half of the body of this terrible assailant into the air, giving the intended victim an opportunity of seeing from what a fate he had escaped. Mulford avoided the fish without much trouble, however, and the next instant he threw himself into the boat, on the bottom of which he lay panting with the violence of his exertions, and unable to move under the reaction which now came over his system.

The mate lay in the bottom of the boat, exhausted and unable to rise, for several minutes; during that space he devoutly returned thanks to God for his escape, and bethought him of the course he was next to pursue, in order to effect the rescue of his companions. The boat was larger than common. It was also well equipped—a mast and sail lying along with the oars, on its thwarts. The rock placed Harry to the windward of the wreck, and by the time he felt sufficiently revived to rise and look about him, his plan of proceeding was fully arranged in

his own mind. Among other things that he saw, as he still lay in the bottom of the boat, was a breaker, which he knew contained fresh-water, and a bread-bag. These were provisions that it was customary for the men to make, when employed on boat duty; and the articles had been left where he now saw them, in the hurry of the movements, as the brig quitted the islets.

Harry rose the instant he felt his strength returning. Striking the breaker with his foot, and feeling the basket with a hand, he ascertained that one held its water, and the other its bread. This was immense relief, for by this time the sufferings of the party on the wreck must be returning with redoubled force. The mate then stepped the mast, and fitted the sprit to the sail, knowing that the latter would be seen fluttering in the wind by those on the wreck, and carry joy to their hearts. After this considerate act, he began to examine into the position of the boat. It was still aground, having been left by the tide; but the water had already risen several inches, and by placing himself on the gunwale, so as to bring the boat on its bilge, and pushing with an oar, he soon got into deep water. It only remained to haul aft the sheet, and right the helm, to be standing through the channel, at a rate that promised a speedy deliverance to his friends, and, most of all, to Rose.

Mulford glanced past the rocks and shoals, attended by the whole company of the sharks. They moved before, behind, and on each side of him, as if unwilling to abandon their prey, even after he had got beyond the limits of their power to do him harm. It was not an easy thing to manage the boat in that narrow and crooked channel, with no other guide for the courses than the eye, and it required so much of the mate's vigilance to keep clear of the sharp angles of the rocks, that he could not once cast his eyes aside to look for the fluttering shawl, which now composed the standing signal of the wreck. At length the boat shot through the last passage of the reef, and issued into open water. Mulford knew that he must come out half a mile at least to leeward of his object, and without even raising his head he flattened in the sheet, put his helm down, and luffed close to the wind. Then, and then only, did he venture to look around him.

Our mate felt his heart leap toward his mouth as he observed the present state of the wreck. It was dead to windward of him, in the first place, and it seemed to be entirely submerged. He saw the shawl fluttering as before; for Tier had fastened one corner to a button-hole of his own jacket, and another to the dress of Biddy, leaving the part which might be called the fly to rise at moments almost perpendicularly in the air, in a way to render it visible at some distance. He also saw the heads and the bodies of those on the schooner's bottom, but to him they appeared to be standing in, or on, the water. The distance may have contributed a little to this appearance, but no doubt remained that so much air had escaped from the hold of the vessel, as to permit it to sink altogether beneath the surface of the sea. It was time, indeed, to proceed to the relief of the sufferers.

Notwithstanding the boat sailed particularly fast, and worked beautifully, it could not equal the impatience of Mulford to get on. Passing away to the northeast a sufficient distance, as he thought, to weather on the wreck, the young man tacked at last, and had the happiness to see that every foot he proceeded was now in a direct line toward Rose. It was only while tacking he perceived that all the fins had disappeared. He felt little doubt that they had deserted him, in order to push for the wreck, which offered so much larger, and so much more attainable prey. This increased his feverish desire to get on, the boat seeming to drag, in his eyes, at the very moment it was leaving a wake full of eddies and little whirlpools. The wind was steady, but it seemed to Mulford that the boat was set to leeward of her course by a current, though this could hardly have been the case, as the wreck, the sole mark of his progress, would have had at least as great a drift

as the boat. At length Mulford—to him it appeared to be an age; in truth, it was after a run of about twenty minutes—came near the goal he so earnestly sought, and got an accurate view of the state of the wreck, and of those on it. The hull of the schooner had, in truth, sunk entirely beneath the surface of the sea; and the party it sustained stood already knee-deep in the water. This was sufficiently appalling; but the presence of the sharks, who were crowding around the spot, rendered the whole scene frightful. To the young mate it seemed as if he must still be too late to save Rose from a fate more terrible than drowning, for the boat fell so far to leeward as to compel him to tack once more. As he swept past the wreck he called out to encourage his friends, begging them to be of good heart for five minutes longer, when he should be able to reach them. Rose held out her arms entreatingly, and the screams of Mrs. Budd and Biddy, which were extorted by the closer and closer approach of the sharks, proclaimed the imminency of the danger they ran, and the importance of not losing a moment of time.

Mulford took his distance with a seaman's eye, and the boat went round like a top. The latter fell off, and the sail filled on the other tack. Then the young mariner saw, with a joy no description can protray, that he looked to windward of the fluttering shawl, toward which his little craft was already flying. He afterward believed that shawl alone prevented the voracious party of fish from assailing those on the wreck, for, though there might not yet be sufficient depth of water to allow of their customary mode of attack, creatures of their voracity did not always wait for such conveniences. But the boat was soon in the midst of the fins, scattering them in all directions; and Mulford let go the sheet, put his helm down, and sprang forward to catch the extended arm of Rose.

It might have been accident, or it might have been the result of skill and interest in our heroine, but certain it is, that the bows of the boat came on the wreck precisely at the place where Rose stood, and her hand was the first object that the young man touched.

"Take my aunt first," cried Rose, resisting Mulford's efforts to lift her into the boat; "she is dreadfully alarmed, and can stand with difficulty."

Although two of Rose's activity and lightness might have been drawn into the boat while the process was going on in behalf of the widow, Mulford lost no time in discussion, but did as he was desired. First directing Tier to hold on to the painter, he applied his strength to the arms of Mrs. Budd, and, assisted by Rose and Biddy, got her safely into the boat, over its bows. Rose now waited not for assistance, but followed her aunt with a haste that proved fear lent her strength in despite her long fast. Biddy came next, though clumsily, and not without trouble, and Jack Tier followed the instant he was permitted so to do. Of course, the boat, no longer held by its painter, drifted away from the spot, and the hull of the schooner, relieved from the weight of four human beings, rose so near the surface again as to bring a small line of its keel out of water. No better evidence could have been given of the trifling power which sustained it, and of the timely nature of the succor brought by Mulford. Had the boat remained near the schooner it would have been found half an hour later that the hull had sunk slowly out of sight, finding its way, doubtless, inch by inch, toward the bottom of the Gulf.

By this time the sun was well up, and the warmth of the hour, season, and latitude was shed on the sufferers. There was an old sail in the boat, and in this the party dried their limbs and feet, which were getting to be numb by their long immersion. Then the mate produced the bag, and opened it, in quest of bread. A small portion was given to each, and, on looking further, the mate discovered that a piece of boiled ship's beef had been secreted in this receptacle. Of this also he gave each a moderate slice, taking a larger portion for himself, as requiring less precaution. The suffering of the party from hunger was far less than that they endured from thirst. Neither had

been endured long enough seriously to enfeeble them, or render a full meal very dangerous, but the thirst had been much the hardest to be borne. Of this fact Biddy soon gave audible evidence.

"The mate is good," she said, "and the bread tastes swate and refreshing, but wather is a blessed thing. Can you no give us one dhrap of the water that falls from heaven, Mr. Mulford? for this wather of the saa is of no use but to drown Christians in."

In an instant the mate had opened a breaker, and filled the tinpot which is almost always to be found in a boat. Biddy said no more, but her eyes pleaded so eloquently that Rose begged the faithful creature might have the first drink. One eager swallow went down, and then a cry of disappointment succeeded. The water was salt, and had been put in the breaker for ballast. The other breaker was tried with the same success.

"It is terrible to be without one drop of water," murmured Rose, "and this food makes it more necessary than ever."

"Patience, patience, dearest Rose—patience for ten minutes, and you shall all drink," answered the mate, filling the sail and keeping the boat away while speaking. "There's water, God be praised, on the rock to which I first swum, and we will secure it before another day's sun helps to make it evaporate."

This announcement quieted the longings of those who endured a thirst which disappointment rendered doubly hard to bear, and away the boat glided toward the rock. As he now flew over the distance, lessened more than one-half by the drift of the wreck; Mulford recalled the scene through which he had so painfully passed the previous night. As often happens, he shuddered at the recollection of things which, at the moment, a desperate resolution had enabled him to encounter with firmness. Still, he thought nothing less than the ardent desire to save Rose could have carried him through the trial with the success which attended his struggles. The dear being at his side asked a few explanations of what had passed; and she bowed her head and wept, equally with pain and delight, as imagination pictured to her the situation of her betrothed, amid that waste of water, with his fearful companions, and all in the hours of deep night.

But that was over now. There was the rock—the blessed rock on which Mulford had so accidentally struck, close before them—and presently they were all on it. The mate took the pot and ran to the little reservoir, returning with a sweet draught for each of the party.

"A blessed, blessed thing is wather!" exclaimed Biddy, this time finding the relief she sought, "and a thousand blessings on *you*, Mr. Mulford, who have niver done us anything but good."

Rose looked a still higher eulogy on the young man, and even Mrs. Budd had something commendatory and grateful to say. Jack Tier was silent, but he had all his eyes about him as he now proved.

"We've all on us been so much taken up with our own affairs," remarked the steward's assistant, "that we've taken but little notice of the neighborhood. If that isn't the brig, Mr. Mulford, running through this very passage, with stun'sails set alow and aloft, I don't know the *Molly Swash* when I see her."

"The brig!" exclaimed the mate, recollecting the vessels he had seen at the break of day for the first time in hours. "Can it be possible that the craft I made out to the southward is the brig?"

"Look and judge for yourself, sir. There she comes, like a race-horse, and if she holds her present course, she must pass somewhere within a mile or so of us, if we stay where we are."

Mulford did look, as did all with him. There was the *Swash*, sure enough, coming down before the wind, and under a cloud of canvas. She might be still a league, or a league and a half distant, but, at the rate at which she was traveling, that distance would soon be passed. She was running through the passage; no doubt with a view to proceed to the Dry Tortugas, to look after the schooner, Spike having the hope that he had dodged his pursuers on the coast of Cuba. The mate now looked for the ship in the north-

western board, believing, as he did, that she was the sloop-of-war. That vessel had gone about, and was standing to the southward, on a taut bowline. She was still a long way off, three or four leagues at least, but the change she had made in her position, since last seen, proved that she was a great sailer. Then she was more than hull down, whereas, now, she was near enough to let the outline of a long, straight fabric be discovered beneath her canvas.

"It is hardly possible that Spike should not see the vessel here in the northern board," Mulford observed to Tier, who had been examining the ship with him. "The lookout is usually good on board the *Swash*, and, just now, should certainly be as good as common. Spike is no dawdler with serious business before him."

"He's a willian!" muttered Jack Tier.

The mate regarded his companion with some surprise. Jack was a very insignificant-looking personage in common, and one would scarcely pause to give him a second look, unless it might be to laugh at his rotundity and little waddling legs. But now the mate fancied he was swelling with feelings that actually imparted somewhat more than usual stature and dignity to his appearance. His face was full of indignation, and there was something about the eye that to Mulford was inexplicable. As Rose, however, had related to him the scene that took place on the islet, at the moment when Spike was departing, the mate supposed that Jack still felt a portion of the resentment that such a collision would be apt to create. From the expression of Jack's countenance at that instant, it struck him Spike might not be exactly safe, should accident put it in the power of the former to do him an injury.

It was now necessary to decide on the course that ought to be pursued. The bag contained sufficient food to last the party several days, and a gallon of water still remained in the cavity of the rock. This last was collected and put in one of the breakers, which was emptied of the salt water in order to receive it. As water, however, was the great necessity in that latitude, Mulford did not deem it prudent to set sail with so small a supply, and he accordingly commenced a search on some of the adjacent rocks, Jack Tier accompany him. They succeeded in doubling their stock of water, and collected several shell-fish, that the females found exceedingly grateful and refreshing. On the score of hunger and thirst, indeed, no one was now suffering. By judiciously sipping a little water at a time, and retaining it in the mouth before swallowing, the latter painful feeling had been gotten rid of; and as for food, there was even more than was actually needed, and that of a very good quality. It is probable that standing in the water for hours, as Rose, and her aunt, and Biddy had been obliged to do, had contributed to lessen the pain endured from thirst, though they had all suffered a good deal from that cause, especially while the sun shone.

Mulford and Tier were half an hour in obtaining the water. By the end of that period the brigantine was so near as to render her hull distinctly visible. It was high time to decide on their future course. The sail had been brailed when the boat reached the rock, and the boat itself lay on the side of the latter opposite to the brig, and where no part of it could be seen by those on board the *Swash*, with the exception of the mast. Under the circumstances, therefore, Mulford thought it wisest to remain where they were, and let the vessel pass, before they attempted to proceed toward Key West, their intended place of refuge. In order to do this, however, it was necessary to cause the whole party to lie down in such a way as to be hid by the inequalities in the rock, as it was now very evident the brig would pass within half a mile of them. Hitherto, it was not probable that they had been seen, and, by using due caution, the chances of Spike's overlooking them altogether amounted nearly to a certainty.

The necessary arrangements were soon made, the boat's mast unstepped, the party placed behind their covers, and the females comfortably bestowed in the spare

sail, where they might get a little undisturbed sleep after the dreadful night, or morning, they had passed. Even Jack Tier lay down to catch his nap, as the most useful manner of bestowing himself for a couple of hours; the time Mulford had mentioned as the period of their stay where they were.

As for the mate, vigilance was his portion, and he took his position, hid like all the rest, where he could watch the movements of his old craft. In about twenty minutes, the brig was quite near; so near that Mulford not only saw the people on board her, who showed themselves in the rigging, but fancied he could recognize their persons. As yet nothing had occurred in the way of change, but just as the *Swash* got abreast of the rock, she began to take in her studding-sails, and that hurriedly, as is apt to occur on board a vessel in sudden emergencies. Our young man was a little alarmed at first, believing that they might have been discovered, but he was soon induced to think that the crew of the brigantine had just then begun to suspect the character of the ship to the northward. That vessel had been drawing near all this time, and was now only some three leagues distant. Owing to the manner in which she headed, or bows on, it was not a very easy matter to tell the character of this stranger, though the symmetry and squareness of her yards rendered it nearly certain she was a cruiser. Though Spike could not expect to meet his old acquaintance here, after the chase he had so lately led her down on the opposite coast, he might and would have his misgivings, and Mulford thought it was his intention to haul up close round the northern angle of the reef, and maintain his advantage of the wind over the stranger. If this were actually done, it might expose the boat to view, for the brig would pass within a quarter of a mile of it, and on the side of the rock on which it lay. It was too late, however, to attempt a change, since the appearance of human beings in such a place would be certain to draw the brig's glasses on them, and the glasses must at once let Spike know who they were. It remained, therefore, only to await the result as patiently as possible.

A very few minutes removed all doubt. The brig hauled as close round the reef as she dared to venture, and in a very short time the boat lay exposed to view to all on board her. The vessel was now so near that Mulford plainly saw the boatswain get upon the coach-house, or little hurricane-house-deck, where Spike stood examining the ship with his glass, and point out the boat, where it lay at the side of the rock. In an instant the glass was leveled at the spot, and the movements on board the brig immediately betrayed to Mulford that the boat was recognized. Sail was shortened on board the *Swash*, and men were seen preparing to lower her stern boat, while everything indicated that the vessel was about to be hove-to. There was no time now to be lost, but the young man immediately gave the alarm.

No sooner did the party arise and show themselves, than the crew of the *Swash* gave three cheers. By the aid of the glass, Spike doubtless recognized their persons, and the fact was announced to the men, by way of stimulating their exertions. This gave an additional spur to the movements of those on the rock, who hastened into their own boat, and made sail as soon as possible.

It was far easier to do all that has been described than to determine on the future course. Capture was certain if the fugitives ventured into the open water, and their only hope was to remain on the reef. If channels for the passage of the boat could be found, escape was highly probable, as the schooner's boat could sail much faster than the brig's boat could row, fast as Mulford knew the last to be. But the experience of the morning had told the mate that the rock rose too near the surface, in many places, for the boat, small as it was, to pass over it; and he must trust a great deal to chance. Away he went, however, standing along a narrow channel, through which the wind just permitted him to lay, with the sail occasionally shaking.

By this time the *Swash* had her boat in

the water, manned with four powerful oars, Spike steering it in his own person. Our young mate placed Tier in the bows, to point out the deepest water, and kept his sail a rap-full, in order to get ahead as fast as possible. Ahead he did get, but it was on a course that soon brought him out in the open water of the main passage through the reef, leaving Spike materially astern. The latter now rose in his boat, and made a signal with his hat, which the boatswain perfectly understood. The latter caused the brig to wear short round on her heel, and boarded his fore-tack in chase, hauling up into the passage as soon as he could again round the reef. Mulford soon saw that it would never do for him to venture far from the rocks, the brig going two feet to his one, though not looking quite so high as he did in the boat. But the *Swash* had her guns, and it was probable they would be used rather than he should escape. When distant two hundred yards from the reef, therefore, he tacked. The new course brought the fugitives nearly at right angles to that steered by Spike, who stood directly on, as if conscious that, sooner or later, such a rencounter must occur. It would seem that the tide was setting through the passage; for when the boat of Mulford again reached the reef, it was considerably to windward of the channel out of which she had issued, and opposite to another which offered very opportunely for her entrance. Into this new channel, then, the mate somewhat blindly ran, feeling the necessity of getting out of gunshot of the brig at every hazard. She at least could not follow him among the rocks, let Spike, in his boat, proceed as he might.

According to appearances, Spike was not likely to be very successful. He was obliged to diverge from his course, in order to go into the main passage at the very point where Mulford had just before done the same thing, and pull along the reef to windward, in order to get into the new channnl, into which the boat he was pursuing had just entered. This brought him not only astern again, but a long bit astern, inasmuch as he was compelled to make the circuit described. On he went, however, as eager in the chase as the hound with his game in view.

Mulford's boat seemed to fly, and glided ahead at least three feet to that of Spike's two. The direction of the channel it was in brought it pretty close to the wind, but the water was quite smooth, and our mate managed to keep the sail full, and his little craft at the same time quite near the weatherly side of the rocks. In the course of ten minutes the fugitives were fully a mile from the brig, which was unable to follow them, but kept standing off and on, in the main passage, waiting the result. At one time Mulford thought the channel would bring him out into open water again, on the northern side of the reef, and more than a mile to the eastward of the point where the ship-channel in which the *Swash* was plying commenced; but an accidental circumstance prevented his standing in far enough to ascertain the fact. That circumstance was as follows:

In running a mile and a half over the reef, in the manner described, Mulford had left the boat of Spike quite half a mile astern. He was now out of gunshot from the brig, or at least beyond the range of her grape, the only missile he feared, and so far to windward that he kept his eye on every opening to the southward, which he fancied might allow of his making a stretch deeper into the mazes of the reef, among which he believed it easiest for him to escape, and to weary the oarsmen of his pursuers. Two or three of these openings offered as he glided along, but it struck him that they all looked so high that the boat would not lay through them—an opinion in which he was right. At length he came abreast of one that seemed straight and clear of obstacles as far as he could see, and through which he might run with a flowing sheet. Down went his helm, and about went his boat, running away to the southward as fast as ever.

Had Spike followed, doubled the same shoal, and kept away again in the same channel as had been done by the boat he chased, all his hopes of success must have vanished at once. This he did not at-

tempt, therefore; but, sheering into one of the openings which the mate had rejected, he cut off quite half a mile in his distance. This was easy enough for him to accomplish, as a rowboat would pull even easier, near to the wind, than with the wind broad on its bows. In consequence of this short-cut, therefore, Spike was actually crossing out into Mulford's new channel, just as the latter had handsomely cleared the mouth of the opening through which he effected his purpose.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the two boats must have been for a few minutes quite near to each other; so near, indeed, did the fugitives now pass their pursuers, that it would have been easy for them to have conversed, had they been so disposed. Not a word was spoken, however; but Mulford went by, leaving Spike about a hundred yards astern. This was a trying moment to the latter, and the devil tempted him to seek his revenge. He had not come unarmed on his enterprise, but three or four loaded muskets lay in the stern-sheets of his yawl. He looked at his men and saw that they could not hold out much longer to pull as they had been pulling. Then he looked at Mulford's boat, and saw it gliding away from him at a rate that would shortly place it another half mile in advance. He seized a musket, and raised it to his shoulder, nay, was in the act of taking aim at his mate, when Rose, who watched his movements, threw herself before Harry, and if she did not actually save his life, at least prevented Spike's attempt on it for that occasion. In the course of the next ten minutes the fugitives had again so far gained on their pursuers, that the latter began to see that their efforts were useless. Spike muttered a few bitter curses, and told his men to lay on their oars.

"It's well for the runaway," he added, "that the gal put herself between us, else would his grog have been stopped forever. I've long suspected this; but had I been sure of it, the Gulf Stream would have had the keeping of his body, the first dark night we were in it together. Lay on your oars, men, lay on your oars; I'm afeared the villain will get through our fingers, arter all."

The men obeyed, and then, for the first time, did they turn their heads, to look at those they had been so vehemently pursuing. The other boat was quite half a mile from them, and it had again tacked. This last occurrence induced Spike to pull slowly ahead, in quest of another short passage to cut the fugitives off; but no such opening offered.

"There he goes about again, by George!" exclaimed Spike. "Give way, lads, give way; an easy stroke, for if he is embayed, he can't escape us!"

Sure enough, poor Mulford *was* embayed, and could see no outlet by which to pass ahead. He tacked his boat two or three times, and he wore round as often; but on every side, shoals, or rocks that actually rose above the surface of the water, impeded his course. The fact was not to be concealed; after all his efforts, and so many promises of success, not only was his further progress ahead cut off, but equally so was the retreat. The passage was not wide enough to admit hope of getting by his pursuers, and the young man came to the conclusion that his better course was to submit with dignity to his fate. For himself he had no hope—he knew Spike's character too well for that; but he did not apprehend any great immediate danger to his companions. Spike had a coarse, brutal admiration for Rose; but her expected fortune, which was believed to be of more amount than was actually the case, was a sort of pledge that he would not willingly put himself in a situation that would prevent the possibility of enjoying it. Strange, hurried, and somewhat confused thoughts passed through Harry Mulford's mind, as he brailed his sail, and waited for his captors to approach and take possession of his boat and himself. This was done quietly, and with very few words on the part of Spike.

Mulford would have liked the appearance of things better had his old commander cursed him, and betrayed other signs of the fury that was boiling in his

very soul. On the contrary, never had Stephen Spike seemed more calm or under better self-command. He smiled, and saluted Mrs. Budd just as if nothing unpleasant had occurred, and alluded to the sharpness of the chase with facetiousness and seeming good-humor. The females were deceived by this manner, and hoped, after all, that the worst that would happen would be a return to their old position on board the *Swash*. This was being so much better off than their horrible situation on the wreck, that the change was not frightful to them.

"What has become of the schooner, Mr. Mulford?" asked Spike, as the boats began to pass down the channel to return to the brig—two of the *Swash's* men taking their seats in that which had been captured, along with their commander, while the other two got a tow from the use of the sail. "I see you have the boat here that we used alongside of her, and suppose you know something of the craft itself."

"She capsized with us in a squall," answered the mate, "and we only left the wreck this morning."

"Capsized!—hum—that was a hard fate, to be sure, and denotes bad seamanship. Now, I've sailed all sorts of craft these forty years, or five-and-thirty at least, and never capsized anything in my life. Stand by there for'ard, to hold on by that rock."

A solitary cap of the coral rose above the water two or three feet, close to the channel, and was the rock to which Spike alluded. It was only some fifty feet in diameter, and of an oval form, rising quite above the ordinary tides, as was apparent by its appearance. It is scarcely necessary to say it had no other fresh water than that which occasionally fell on its surface, which surface being quite smooth, retained very little of the rain it received. The boat was soon alongside of this rock, where it was held broadside-to by the two seamen.

"Mr. Mulford, do me the favor to step up here," said Spike, leading the way on to the rock himself. "I have a word to say to you before we get on board the old *Molly* once more."

Mulford silently complied, fully expecting that Spike intended to blow his brains out, and willing the bloody deed should be done in a way to be as little shocking to Rose as circumstances would allow. But Spike manifested no such intention. A more refined cruelty was uppermost in his mind; and his revenge was calculated, and took care to fortify itself with some of the quibbles and artifices of the law. He might not be exactly right in his legal reservations, but he did not the less rely on their virtue.

"Hark'ee, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, sharply, as soon as both were on the rock, "you have run from my brig, thereby showing your distaste for her; and I've no disposition to keep a man who wishes to quit me. Here you are, sir, on *terrum firm*, as the scholars call it; and here you have my full permission to remain. I wish you a good-morning, sir; and will not fail to report when we get in that you left the brig of your own pleasure."

"You will not have the cruelty to abandon me on this naked rock, Captain Spike, and that without a morsel of food or a drop of water?"

"Wather is a blessed thing!" exclaimed Biddy. "Do not think of lavin' the gentleman without wather."

"You left *me*, sir, without food or water, and you can fit out your own rock—yes, d——e, sir, you left me *under fire*, and that is a thing no true-hearted man would have thought of. Stand by to make sail, boys; and if he offer to enter the boat, pitch him out with the boat-hooks."

Spike was getting angry, and he entered the boat again without perceiving that Rose had left it. Light of foot and resolute of spirit, the beautiful girl, handsomer than ever, perhaps, by her excited feelings and dishevelled hair, had sprung on the rock as Spike stepped into the boat forward, and when the latter turned round, after loosening the sail, he found he was drifting away from the very being who was the object of all his efforts. Mulford, believing that Rose was to be abandoned as well as himself, received the noble girl

in his arms, though ready to implore Spike, on his knees, to return and at least to take her off. But Spike wanted no solicitation on that point. He returned of his own accord, and had just reached the rock again, when a report of a gun drew all eyes toward the brig.

The *Swash* had again run out of the passage, and was beating up, close to the reef as she dared to go, with a signal flying. All the seamen at once understood the cause of this hint. The strange sail was getting too near, and everybody could see that it was the sloop-of-war. Spike looked at Rose, a moment, in doubt. But Mulford raised his beloved in his arms and carried her to the side of the rock, stepping on board the boat.

Spike watched the movements of the young man with jealous vigilance, and no sooner was Rose placed on her seat than he motioned significantly to the mate to quit the boat.

"I cannot and will not voluntarily, Captain Spike," answered Harry, calmly. "It would be committing a sort of suicide."

A sign brought two of the men to the captain's assistance. While the latter held Rose in her place, the sailors shoved Harry on the rock again. Had Mulford been disposed to resist, these two men could not very easily have ejected him from the boat, if they could have done it at all; but he knew there were others in reserve, and feared that blood might be shed, in the irritated state of Spike, in the presence of Rose. While, therefore, he would not be accessory to his own destruction, he would not engage in what he knew would prove not only a most harassing, bnt a bootless resistance. The consequence was that the boats proceeded, leaving him alone on the rock.

It was perhaps fortunate for Rose that she fainted. Her condition occupied her aunt and Biddy, and Spike was enabled to reach the brig without any further interruption. Rose was taken on board still nearly insensible, while her two female companions were so much confused and distressed that neither could have given a reasonably clear account of what had just occurred. Not so with Jack Tier, however. That singular being noted all that passed, seated in the eyes of the boat, away from the confusion that prevailed in its stern-sheets, and apparently undisturbed by it.

As the party was sailing back toward the brig, the lighthouse boat towing the *Swash's* yawl, Jack took as good an observation of the channels of that part of the reef as his low position would allow. He tried to form in his mind a sort of chart of the spot, for, from the instant Mulford was thus deserted, the little fellow had formed a stern resolution to attempt his rescue. How that was to be done, however, was more than he yet knew; and when they reached the brig's side, Tier may be said to have been filled with good intentions, rather than with any very available knowledge to enable him to put them in execution.

As respects the two vessels, the arrival of Spike on board his own was not a moment too soon. The *Poughkeepsie*, for the stranger to the northward was now ascertained to be that sloop-of-war, was within long gunshot by this time, and near enough to make certain, by means of her glasses, of the character of the craft with which she was closing. Luckily for the brig, she lay in the channel so often mentioned, and through which both she and her present pursuer had so lately come, on their way to the northward. This brought her to windward, as the wind then stood, with a clear passage before her. Not a moment was lost. No sooner were the females sent below, than sail was made on the brig, and she began to beat through the passage, making long legs and short ones. She was chased, as a matter of course, and that hard, the difference in sailing between the two crafts not being sufficiently great to render the brigantine's escape by any means certain, while absolutely within the range of those terrible missiles that were used by the man-of-war's men.

But Spike soon determined not to leave a point so delicate as that of his own and his vessel's security to be decided by a mere superiority in the way of heels. The

Florida Reef, with all its dangers, windings, and rocks, was as well known to him as the entrances to the port of New York. In addition to its larger channels, of which there are three or four, through which ships of size can pass, it had many others that would admit only vessels of a lighter draught of water. The brig was not flying light, it is true, but she was merely in good ballast trim, and passages would be available to her, into which the *Poughkeepsie* would not dare to venture. One of these lesser channels was favorably placed to further the escape of Spike, and he shoved the brig into it after the struggle had lasted less than an hour. This passage offered a shorter cut to the south side of the reef than the main channel, and the sloop-of-war, doubtless perceiving the uselessness of pursuit, under such circumstances, wore round on her heel, and came down through the main channel again, just entering the open water, near the spot where the schooner had sunk, as the sun was setting.

CHAPTER X.

"*Shallow.*—Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pound?

Evans.—Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

Shallow.—I know the youug gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

Evans.—Seven hundred pounds, and possibilities, is good gifts." —SHAKESPEARE.

As for Spike, he had no intention of going to the southward of the Florida Reef again until his business called him there. The lost bag of doubloons was still gleaming before his imagination, and no sooner did the *Poughkeepsie* bear up than he shortened sail, standing back and forth in his narrow and crooked channel, rather losing ground than gaining, though he took great pains not to let his artifice be seen. When the *Poughkeepsie* was so far to the northward as to render it safe, he took in everything but one or two of his lowest sails, and followed easily in the same direction. As the sloop-of-war carried her light and loftier sails, she remained visible to the people of the *Swash* long after the *Swash* had ceased to be visible to her. Profiting by this circumstance, Spike entered the main channel again, some time before it was dark, and selected a safe anchorage there that was well-known to him; a spot where sufficient sand had collected on the coral to make good holding-ground, and where a vessel would be nearly embayed, though always to windward of her channel going out, by the formation of the reef. Here he anchored, in order to wait until morning ere he ventured further north.

During the whole of that dreadful day, Rose had remained in her cabin, disconsolate, nearly unable, as she was absolutely unwilling, to converse. Now it was that she felt the total insufficiency of a mind feeble as that of her aunt's to administer consolation to misery like her own. Nevertheless, the affectionate solicitude of Mrs. Budd, as well as that of the faithful creature, Biddy, brought some relief, and reason and resignation began slowly to resume their influence. Yet was the horrible picture of Harry, dying by inches, deserted in the midst of the waters on his solitary rock, ever presented to her thoughts, until, once or twice, her feelings verged on madness. Prayer brought its customary relief, however; and we do not think that we much exaggerate the fact, when we say that Rose passed fully one half of that terrible afternoon on her knees.

As for Jack Tier, he was received on board the brig much as if nothing had happened. Spike passed and repassed him fifty times, without even an angry look or a word of abuse; and the deputy-steward dropped quietly into the duties of his office without meeting with either reproach or hindrance. The only allusion, indeed, that was made to his recent adventures, took place in a conversation that was held on the subject in the galley, the interlocutors being Jack himself, Josh the steward, and Simon the cook.

"Where you been scullin' to, 'bout on dat reef, Jack, wid dem 'ere women, I won'er now?" demanded Josh, after tasting the cabin soup, in order to ascertain how near it was to being done. "I

t'ink it no great fun to dodge 'bout among dem rock in a boat, for anudder hurricane might come when a body least expeck him."

"Oh," said Jack, cavalierly, "two hurricanes no more come in one month than two shot in the same hole. We've been turtlin', that's all. I wish we had in your coppers, cook, some of the critters that we fell in with in our cruise."

"Wish 'e had, master steward, wid all my heart," answered the fat, glistening potentate of the galley. "But hark'ee, Jack, what became of our young mate, can 'e tell? Some say he get kill at 'e Dry Tortugas, and some say he war' scullin' round in dat boat you hab, wid 'e young woman, eh?"

"Ah, boys," answered Jack, mournfully, "sure enough, what *has* become of him?"

"You know, why can't you tell? What good to hab secret among friend?"

"*Are* ye his friends, lads? Do you really feel as if you could give a poor soul in its agony a helpin' hand?"

"Why not?" said Josh, in a reproachful way. "Misser Mulford's 'e bess mate dis brig ebber get; and I don't see why Cap'in Spike want to be rid of him."

"Because he's a willian!" returned Jack, between his grated teeth. "D'ye know what that means in English, Master Josh; and can you and cook here, both of whom have sailed with the man years in and years out, say whether my words be true or not?"

"Dat as a body understand 'em. Accordin' to some rule, Stephen Spike not a werry honest man; but accordin' to 'nudder some, he as good as anybody else."

"Yes, dat just de upshot of de matter," put in Simon approvingly. "De whole case lie in dat meanin'!"

"D'ye call it right to let a human being starve, or to suffer for water, on a naked rock, in the midst of the ocean?"

"Who do dat?"

"The willian who is captain of this brig; and all because he thinks young eyes and bloomin' cheeks prefer young eyes and bloomin' cheeks to his own grisly beard and old lookouts."

"Dat bad; dat werry bad," said Josh, shaking his head, a way of denoting dissatisfaction, in which Simon joined him; for no crime appeared sufficiently grave in the eyes of these two sleek and well-fed officials to justify such a punishment. "Dat mons'ous bad, and cap'in ought to know better dan do *dat*. I nebber starves a mouse, if I catches him in de bread-locker. Now dat a sort of reason'ble punishment, too; but I nebber does it. If mouse eat my bread, it do seem right to tell mouse dat he hab enough, and dat he must not eat any more for a week, or a mont', but it too cruel for me, and I nebber does it; no, I t'rows de little debil overboard, and let's him drown like a gentle'em."

"Y-e-s," drawled out Simon, in a philanthropical tone of voice, "dat 'e best way. What good it do to torment a fellow-critter? If Misser Mulford run, why put him down run, and let him go, I say, on'y mulk his wages; but what good it do anybody to starve him? Now dis is my opinion, gentle'em, and dat is, dat starvation be wuss dan choleric. Choleric kill, I knows, and so does starvation kill; but of de two, give me de choleric fuss; if I gets well of dat, den try starwation if you can."

"I'm glad to hear you talk in this manner, my hearties," put in Jack; and I hope I may find you accommodatin' in a plan I've got to help the maty out of this difficulty. As a friend of Stephen Spike's, I would do it; for it must be a terrible thing to die with such a murder on one's soul. Here's the boat that we picked up at the lighthouse yonder, in tow of the brig at this minute; and there's everything in her comfortable for a long run, as I know from having sailed in her; and what I mean is this; as we left Mr. Mulford, I took the bearings and distance of the rock he was on, d'ye understand, and think I could find my way back to it. You see the brig's travelin' slowly north ag'in, and afore long we shall be in the neighborhood of that very rock. We, cook and stewards, will be called on to keep an anchor-watch, if the brig fetches up, as I heard the captain tell the Spanish gentle-

man he thonght she would; and then we can take the boat that's in the water, and go and have a hunt for the maty."

The two blacks looked at Tier earnestly; then they turned their heads to look at each other. The idea struck each as bold and novel, but each saw serious difficulties in it. At length Josh, as became his superior station, took on himself the office of expressing the objections that occurred to his mind.

"Dat nebber do!" exclaimed the steward. "We be's quite willin' to serve 'e mate, who's a good gentle'em and as nice a young man as ever sung out, 'Hard-a-lee,' but we must t'ink little bit of number one; or, for dat matter, of number two, as Simon would be implercated as well as myself. If Cap'n Spike once knew we've lent a hand in sich a job, he'd never overlook it. I knows him *well;* and that is sayin' as much as need be said of any man's character. You nebber catch *me* runnin' myself into his jaws; would rather fight a shark widout any knife. No, no —I knows him *well.* Den comes anudder werry unanswerable objecksh'un, and dat is, dat 'e brig owe bot' Simon and I money. Fifty dollars, each on us, if she owe one cent. Now do you t'ink in cander, Jack, dat two color' gentle'em, like us, can t'row away our fortins like two sons of a York merchant dat has inherited a hundred t'ousand dollar tudder day?"

"There is no occasion for running at all, or for losing your wages."

"How you get 'e mate off, den? Can he walk away on de water? If so, let him go widout us. A werry good gentle'em is Misser Mulford, but not good enough to mulk Simon and me out of fifty dollar each."

"You will not hear my project, Josh, and so will never know what I would be at."

"Well, come, tell him jest as you supposes him. Now listen, Simon, so dat not a word be loss."

"My plan is to take the boat, if we anchor, as anchor I know we shall, and go and find the rock and bring Mr. Mulford off; then we can come back to the brig, and get on board ourselves, and let the mate sail away in the boat by himself. On this plan nobody will run, and no wages be mulcted."

"But dat take time, and an anchor-watch last but two hours, supposin' even dat 'ey puts all t'ree of us in de same watch."

"Spike usually does that, you know. 'Let the cook and the stewards keep the midnight watch,' he commonly says, 'and that will give the foremast hands a better snooze.'"

"Yes, he do say *dat,* Josh," put in Simon, "most ebbery time we comes-to."

"I know he does, and supposes he will say it to-night, if he comes-to to-night. But a two-hour watch may not be long enough to do all you wants; and den, jest t'ink for a moment, should 'e cap'in come on deck and hail 'e forecastle and find us all gone, I wouldn't be in your skin, Jack, for dis brig in sich a kerlamity. I know Cap'in Spike well; t'ree time I endebber to run myself, and each time he bring me up wid a round turn; so, nowadays, I nebber t'inks of sich a projeck any longer."

"But I do not intend to leave the forecastle without some one on it to answer a hail. No, all I want is a companion; for I do not like to go out on the reef at midnight all alone. If one of you will go with me, the other can stay and answer the captain's hail, should he really come on deck in our watch—a thing very little likely to happen. When once his head is on his pillow, a'ter a hard day's work, it's not very apt to be lifted ag'in without a call or a squall. If you do know Stephen Spike *well,* Josh, I know him better."

"Well, Jack, dis here is a new idee, d'ye see, and a body must take time to consider on it. If Simon and I do ship for dis v'y'age, 'twill be for lub of Mr. Mulford, and not for *his* money or *your'n.*"

This was all the encouragement of his project Jack Tier could obtain, on that occasion, from either his brother steward, or from the cook. These blacks were well enough disposed to rescue an innocent and unoffending man from the atrocious death to which Spike had condemned his mate, but neither lost sight of his own security or interest. They promised Tier not to

betray him, however; and he had the fullest confidence in their pledges. They who live together in common usually understand the feeling that prevails, on any given point, in their own set; and Jack felt pretty certain that Harry was a greater favorite in and about the caboose than the captain. On that feeling he relied, and he was fain to wait the course of events, ere he came to any absolute conclusion as to his own course.

The interview in the galley took place about half an hour before the brig anchored for the night. Tier, who often assisted on such occasions, went aloft to help secure the royal, one of the gaskets of which had got loose, and from the yard he had an excellent opportunity to take a look at the reef, the situation of the vessel, and the probable bearings of the rock on which poor Mulford had been devoted to a miserable death. This opportunity was much increased by Spike's hailing him, while on the yard, and ordering him to take a good look at the sloop-of-war, and at the same time to ascertain if any boats were "prowlin' about, in order to make a set upon us in the night." On receiving this welcome order, Jack answered with a cheerful "Ay, ay, sir," and standing upon the yard, he placed an arm around the mast, and remained for a long time making his observations. The command to look out for boats would have been a sufficient excuse had he continued on the yard as long as it was light.

Jack had no difficulty in finding the *Poughkeepsie*, which was already through the passage, and no longer visible from the deck. She appeared to be standing to the northward and westward, under easy canvas, like a craft that was in no hurry. This fact was communicated to Spike in the usual way. The latter seemed pleased, and he answered in a hearty manner, just as if no difficulty had ever occurred between him and the steward's assistant.

"Very well, Jack! bravo Jack!—now take a good look for boats; you'll have light enough for that this half hour," cried the captain. "If any are out, you'll find them pulling down the channel, or maybe they'll try to shorten the cut, by attempting to pull athwart the reef. Take a good and steady look for them, my man."

"Ay, ay, sir; I'll do all I can with naked eyes," answered Jack, "but I could do better, sir, if they would only send me up a glass by these here signal-halyards. With a glass, a fellow might speak with some sartainty."

Spike seemed struck with the truth of this suggestion; and he soon sent up a glass aloft by the signal-halyards. Thus provided, Jack descended as low as the cross-trees, where he took his seat, and began to survey at his leisure. While thus employed, the brig was secured for the night, her decks were cleared, and the people were ordered to get their suppers, previously to setting an anchor-watch, and turning-in for the night. No one heeded the movements of Tier—for Spike had gone into his own stateroom—with the exception of Josh and Simon. Those two worthies were still in the galley, conversing on the subject of Jack's recent communications; and ever and anon one of them would stick his head out of the door and look aloft, withdrawing it, and shaking it significantly, as soon as his observations were ended.

As for Tier, he was seated quite at his ease; and having slung his glass to one of the shrouds, in a way to admit of its being turned as on a pivot, he had every opportunity for observing accurately, and at his leisure. The first thing Jack did was to examine the channel very closely, in order to make sure that no boats were in it, after which he turned the glass with great eagerness toward the reef, in the almost hopeless office of ascertaining something concerning Mulford. In point of fact, the brig had anchored quite three leagues from the solitary rock of the deserted mate, and, favored as he was by his elevation, Jack could hardly expect to discern so small and low an object as that rock at so great a distance. Nevertheless, the glass was much better than common. It had been a present to Spike from one who was careful in his selections of such objects, and who had accidentally

been under a serious obligation to the captain. Knowing the importance of a good look, as regards the boats, Spike had brought this particular instrument, of which, in common, he was very chary, from his own stateroom, and sent it aloft, in order that Jack might have every available opportunity of ascertaining his facts. It was this glass, then, which was the means of the important discoveries the little fellow, who was thus perched on the fore-topmast cross-trees of the *Swash*, did actually succeed in making.

Jack actually started when he first ascertained how distinctly and near the glass he was using brought distant objects. The gulls that sailed across its disk, though a league off, appeared as if near enough to be touched by the hand, and even their feathers gave out not only their hues, but their forms. Thus, too, was it with the surface of the ocean, of which the little waves that agitated the water of the reef, might be seen tossing up and down, at more than twice the range of the *Poughkeepsie's* heaviest gun. Naked rocks, low and subdued as they were in color, too, were to be noted, scattered up and down in the panorama. At length Tier fancied his glass covered a field that he recognized. It was distant, but might be seen from his present elevation. A second look satisfied him he was right; and he next clearly traced the last channel in which they had endeavored to escape from Spike, or that in which the boat had been taken. Following it along, by slowly moving the glass, he actually hit the rock on which Mulford had been deserted. It was peculiar in shape, size, and elevation above the water, and connected with the circumstance of the channel, which was easily enough seen by the color of the water, and more easily from his height than if he had been in it, he could not be mistaken. The little fellow's heart beat quick as he made the glass move slowly over its surface, anxiously searching for the form of the mate. It was not to be seen. A second and more careful sweep of the glass made it certain that the rock was deserted.

Although a little reflection might have satisfied any one Mulford was not to be sought in that particular spot, so long after he had been left there, Jack Tier felt grievously disappointed when he was first made certain of the accuracy of his observations. A minute later he began to reason on the matter, and he felt more encouraged. The rock on which the mate had been abandoned was smooth, and could not hold any fresh water that might have been left by the late showers. Jack also remembered that it had neither seaweed nor shell-fish. In short, the utmost malice of Spike could not have selected, for the immolation of his victim, a more suitable place. Now Tier had heard Harry's explanation to Rose, touching the manner in which he had waded and swum about the reef that very morning, and it at once occurred to him that the young man had too much energy and spirit to remain helpless and inactive to perish on a naked rock, when there might be a possibility of at least prolonging existence, if not of saving it. This induced the steward to turn the glass slowly over the water, and along all the ranges of visible rock that he could find in that vicinity. For a long time the search was useless, the distance rendering such an examination not only difficult, but painful. At length Jack, about to give up the matter in despair, took one sweep with the glass nearer to the brig, as much to obtain a general idea of the boat channels of the reef, as in any hope of finding Mulford, when an object moving in the water came within the field of the glass. He saw it but for an instant, as the glass swept slowly past, but it struck him it was something that had life, and was in motion. Carefully going over the same ground again, after a long search, he again found what he so anxiously sought. A good look satisfied him that he was right. It was certainly a man wading along the shallow water of the reef, immersed to his waist—and it must be Mulford.

So excited was Jack Tier by this discovery that he trembled like a leaf. A minute or two elapsed before he could again use the glass; and when he did, a long

and anxious search was necessary before so small an object could be once more found. Find it he did, however, and then he got its range by the vessel, in a way to make sure of it. Yes, it was a man, and it was Mulford.

Circumstances conspired to aid Jack in the investigation that succeeded. The sun was near setting, but a stream of golden light gleamed over the waters, particularly illuminating the portion which came within the field of the glass. It appeared then that Harry, in his efforts to escape from the rock, and to get nearer to the edge of the main channel, where his chances of being seen and rescued would be tenfold what they were on his rock, had moved south, by following the naked reef and the shallow places, and was actually more than a league nearer to the brig than he would have been had he remained stationary. There had been hours in which to make this change, and the young man had probably improved them to the utmost.

Jack watched the form that was wading slowly along with an interest he had never before felt in the movements of any human being. Whether Mulford saw the brig or not, it was difficult to say. She was quite two leagues from him, and, now that her sails were furled, she offered but little for the eye to rest on at that distance. At first, Jack thought the young man was actually endeavoring to get nearer to her, though it must have been a forlorn hope that should again place him in the hands of Spike. It was, however, a more probable conjecture that the young man was endeavoring to reach the margin of the passage, where a good deal of rock was above water, and near to which he had already managed to reach. At one time Jack saw that the mate was obliged to swim, and he actually lost sight of him for a time. His form, however, reappeared, and then it slowly emerged from the water, and stood erect on a bare rock of some extent. Jack breathed freer at this; for Mulford was now on the very margin of the channel, and might be easily reached by the boat, should he prevail on Josh or Simon, to attempt the rescue.

At first Jack Tier fancied that Mulford had knelt to return thanks on his arrival at a place of comparative safety; but a second look satisfied him that Harry was drinking from one of the little pools of fresh water left by the late shower. When he rose from drinking, the young man walked about the place, occasionally stooping, signs that he was picking up shellfish for his supper. Suddenly, Mulford darted forward and passed beyond the field of the glass. When Jack found him again, he was in the act of turning a small turtle, using his knife on the animal immediately after. Had Jack been in danger of starvation himself, and found a source of food as ample and as grateful as this, he could scarcely have been more delighted. The light now began to wane perceptibly, still Harry's movements could be discerned. The turtle was killed and dressed, sufficiently at least for the mate's purposes, and the latter was seen collecting sea-weed, and bits of plank, boards and sticks of wood, of which more or less, in drifting past, had lodged upon the rocks. "Is it possible," thought Jack, "that he is so werry partic'lar he can't eat his turtle raw? Will he, indeed, venture to light a fire, or has he the means?" Mulford was so particular, however; he did venture to light a fire, and he had the means. This may be said to be the age of matches—not in a connubial, though in an inflammatory sense—and the mate had a small stock in a tight box that he habitually carried on his person. Tier saw him at work over a little pile he had made for a long time, the beams of day departing now so fast as to make him fearful he should soon lose his object in the increasing obscurity of twilight. Suddenly a light gleamed and the pile sent forth a clear flame. Mulford went to and fro collecting materials to feed his fire, and was soon busied in cooking his turtle. All this Tier saw and understood, the light of the flames coming in proper time to supply the vacuum left by the departure of that of day.

In a minute Tier had no difficulty in seeing the fire that Mulford had lighted on

his low and insulated domains with the naked eye. It gleamed brightly in that solitary place; and the steward was much afraid it would be seen by some one on deck, get to be reported to Spike, and lead to Harry's destruction after all. The mate appeared to be insensible to his danger, however, occasionally casting piles of dry sea-weed on his fire, in a way to cause the flames to flash up as if kindled anew by gunpowder. It now occurred to Tier that the young man had a double object in lighting this fire, which would answer not only the purposes of his cookery, but as a signal of distress to anything passing near. The sloop-of-war, though more distant than the brig, was in his neighborhood; and she might possibly yet send relief. Such was the state of things when Jack was startled by a sudden hail from below. It was Spike's voice, and it came up to him short and quick.

"Fore-topmast cross-trees, there! What are you about all this time, Master Jack Tier, in them fore-topmast cross-trees, I say?" demanded Spike.

"Keeping a lookout for boats from the sloop-of-war, as you bade me, sir," answered Jack coolly.

"D'ye see any, my man? Is the water clear ahead of us, or not?"

"It's getting to be so dark, sir, I can see no longer. While there was daylight, no boat was to be seen."

"Come down, man—come down; I've business for you below. The sloop is far enough to the nor'ard, and we shall neither see nor hear from her to-night. Come down, I say, Jack—come down."

Jack obeyed, and securing the glass, he began to descend the rigging. He was soon as low as the top, when he paused a moment to take another look. The fire was still visible, shining like a torch on the surface of the water, casting its beams abroad like "a good deed in a naughty world." Jack was sorry to see it, though he once more took its bearing from the brig, in order that he might know where to find the spot, in the event of a search for it. When on the stretcher of the fore-rigging, Jack stopped and again looked for his beacon. It had disappeared, having sunk below the circular formation of the earth. By ascending two or three ratlines, it came into view, and by going down as low as the stretcher again it disappeared. Trusting that no one, at that hour, would have occasion to go aloft, Jack now descended to the deck, and went aft with the spyglass.

Spike and Señor Montefalderon were under the coach-house, no one else appearing on any part of the quarter-deck. The people were eating their suppers, and Josh and Simon were busy in the galley. As for the females, they chose to remain in their own cabin, where Spike was well pleased to leave them.

"Come this way, Jack," said the captain, in his best-humored tone of voice, "I've a word to say to you. Put the glass in at my stateroom window, and come hither."

Tier did as ordered.

"So you can make out no boats to the nor'ard, ha, Jack! nothing to be seen thereaway?"

"Nothing in the way of a boat, sir."

"Ay, ay, I daresay there's plenty of water, and some rock. The Florida Reef has no scarcity of either, to them that knows where to look for one, and to steer clear of the other. Hark'ee, Jack; so you got the schooner under way from the Dry Tortugas, and undertook to beat her to Key West, when she fancied herself a turtle, and over she went with you—is that it, my man?"

"The schooner turned turtle with us, sure enough, sir; and we all came near drowning on her bottom."

"No sharks in that latitude and longitude, eh, Jack?"

"Plenty on 'em, sir; and I thought they would have got us all, at one time. More than twenty set of fins were in sight at once, for several hours."

"You could hardly have supplied the gentlemen with a leg or an arm, each. But where was the boat all this time—you had the lighthouse boat in tow, I suppose?"

"She had been in tow, sir; but Madam Budd talked so much dictionary to the painter that it got adrift."

"Yet I found you all in it."

"Very true, sir. Mr. Mulford swam quite a mile to reach the rocks, and found the boat aground on one of 'em. As soon as he got the boat he made sail, and came and took us off. We had reason to thank God he could do so."

Spike looked dark and thoughtful. He muttered the words "swam," and "rocks," but was too cautious to allow any expression to escape him, that might betray to the Mexican officer that which was uppermost in his mind. He was silent, however, for quite a minute, and Jack saw that he had awakened a dangerous source of distrust in the captain's breast.

"Well, Jack," resumed Spike, after a pause, "can you tell anything of the doubloons? I nat'rally expected to find them in the boat, but there was none to be seen. You scarcely pumped the schooner out, without overhauling her lockers, and falling in with them doubloons."

"We found them, sure enough, and had them ashore with us, in the tent, down to the moment when we sailed."

"When you took them off to the schooner, eh? My life for it, the gold was not forgotten."

"It was not, sure enough, sir; but we took it off with us to the schooner, and it went down in her when she finally sunk."

Another pause, during which Señor Montefalderon and Captain Spike looked significantly at each other.

"Do you think, Jack, you could find the spot where the schooner went down?"

"I could come pretty near it, sir, though not on the very spot itself. Water leaves no mark over the grave of a sunken ship."

"If you can take us within a reasonable distance, we might find it by sweeping for it. Them doubloons are worth some trouble; and their recovery would be better than a long v'y'ge to us any day."

"They would, indeed, Don Esteban," observed the Mexican; "and my poor country is not in a condition to bear heavy losses. If Señor Jack Tier can find the wreck, and we regain the money, ten of those doubloons shall be his reward, though I take them from my own share, much diminished as it will be."

"You hear, Jack—here is a chance to make your fortune! You say you sailed with me in old times—and old times were good times with this brig, though times has changed; but if you sailed with me in *old* times, you must remember that whatever the *Swash* touched she turned to gold."

"I hope you don't doubt, Captain Spike, my having sailed in the brig, not only in old times, but in her best times."

Jack seemed hurt as he put this question, and Spike appeared in doubt. The latter gazed at the little, rotund, queer-looking figure before him, as if endeavoring to recognize him; and when he had done, he passed his hand over his brow, like one who endeavored to recall past objects by excluding those that are present.

"You will then show us the spot where my unfortunate schooner did sink, Señor Jack Tier?" put in the Mexican.

"With all my heart, señor, if it is to be found. I think I could take you within a cable's length of the place, though hunger and thirst, and sharks, and the fear of drowning, will keep a fellow from having a very bright lookout for such a matter."

"In what water do you suppose the craft to lie, Jack?" demanded the captain.

"You know as much of that as I do myself, sir. She went down about the cable's length from the reef, toward which she was a settin' at the time; and had she kept afloat an hour longer she might have grounded on the rocks."

"She's better where she is, if we can only find her by sweeping. On the rocks we could do nothing with her but break her up, and ten to one the doubloons would be lost. By the way, Jack, do you happen to know where the scoundrel of a mate of mine stowed the money?"

"When we left the island I carried it down to the boat myself—and a good lift

I had of it. As sure as you are there, señor, I was obliged to take it on a shoulder. When it came out of the boat, Mr. Mulford carried it below; and I heard him tell Miss Rose a'terward, that he had thrown it into a bread-locker."

"Where we shall find it, Don Wan, notwithstanding all this veering and hauling. The old brig has luck when doubloons are in question, and ever has had since I've commanded her. Jack, we shall have to call on the cook and stewards for an anchor-watch to-night. The people are a good deal fagged with boxing about this reef so much, and I shall want 'em all as fresh to-morrow as they can be got. You idlers had better take the middle watches, which will give the forecastle chaps longer naps."

"Ay, ay, sir; we'll manage that for 'em. Josh and Simon can go on at twelve, and I will take the watch at two, which will give the men all the rest they want, as I can hold out for four hours full. I'm as good for an anchor-watch as any man in the brig, Captain Spike."

"That you are Jack, and better than some on 'em. Take you all round, and round it is, you're a rum 'un, my lad—the queerest little jigger that ever lay out on a royal-yard."

Jack might have been a little offended at Spike's compliments, but he was certainly not sorry to find him so good-natured, after all that had passed. He now left the captain and his Mexican companion, seemingly in close conference together, while he went below himself, and dropped as naturally into the routine of his duty, as if he had never left the brig. In the cabin he found the females, of course, Rose scarce raising her face from the shawl which lay on the bed of her own berth. Jack busied himself in a locker near this berth, until an opportunity occurred to touch Rose, unseen by her aunt or Biddy. The poor heart-stricken girl raised her face, from which all color had departed, and looked almost vacantly at Jack, as if to ask an explanation. Hope is truly, by a most beneficent provision of Providence, one of the very last blessings to abandon us. It is probable that we are thus gifted in order to encourage us to rely on the great atonement to the last moment, since, without this natural endowment to cling to hope, despair might well be the fate of millions, who, there is reason to think, reap the benefit of that act of divine mercy. It would hardly do to say that anything like hope was blended with the look Rose now cast on Jack, but it was anxious and inquiring.

The steward bent his head to the locker, bringing his face quite near to that of Rose, and whispered: "There is hope, Miss Rose, but do not betray me."

These were blessed words for our heroine to hear, and they produced an immediate and great revolution in her feelings. Commanding herself, however, she looked her questions, instead of trusting even to a whisper. Jack did not say any more just then; but shortly after he called Rose, whose eyes were now never off him, into the main cabin, which was empty. It was so much pleasanter to sleep in an airy stateroom on deck that Señor Montefalderon, indeed, had given up the use of this cabin, in a great measure, seldom appearing in it except at meals, having taken possession of the deserted apartment of Mulford. Josh was in the galley, where he spent most of his time, and Rose and Jack had no one to disturb their conference.

"He is safe, Miss Rose — God be praised!" whispered Jack. "Safe for the present, at least; with food and water and fire to keep him warm at night."

It was impossible for Rose not to understand to whom there was allusion, though her head became dizzy under the painful confusion that prevailed in it. She pressed her temples with both hands, and asked a thousand questions with her eyes. Jack considerately handed her a glass of water before he proceeded. As soon as he found her a little more composed he related the facts connected with his discovery of Mulford, precisely as they had occurred.

"He is now on a large rock—a little island, indeed—where he is safe from the ocean unless it come on to blow a hurricane," concluded Jack, "and has fresh

water and fresh turtle in the bargain. A man might live a month on one such turtle as I saw Mr. Mulford cutting up this evening."

"Is there no way of rescuing him from the situation you have mentioned, Jack? In a year or two I shall be my own mistress and have money to do as I please with; put me only in the way of taking Mr. Mulford from that rock and I will share all I am worth on earth with you, dear Jack."

"Ay, so it is with the whole sex," muttered Tier; "let them only once give up their affections to a man and he becomes dearer to them than pearls and rubies! But you know me, Miss Rose, and know *why* and *how well* I would sarve you. My story and my feelin's are as much your secret as your story and your feelin's is mine. We shall pull together, if we don't pull so very strong. Now hearken to me, Miss Rose, and I will let you into the secret of my plan to help Mr. Mulford make a launch."

Jack then communicated to his companion his whole project for the night. Spike had, of his own accord, given to him and his two associates, Simon and Josh, the care of the brig between midnight and morning. If he could prevail on either of these two men to accompany him it was his intention to take the lighthouse boat, which was riding by its painter astern of the brig, and proceed as fast as they could to the spot whither Mulford had found his way. By his calculations, if the wind stood as it then was, little more than an hour would be necessary to reach the rock, and about as much more to return. Should the breeze lull, of which there was no great danger, since the easterly trades were again blowing, Jack thought he and Josh might go over the distance with the oars in about double the time. Should both Josh and Simon refuse to accompany him he thought he should attempt the rescue of the mate alone, did the wind stand, trusting to Mulford's assistance, should he need it, in getting back to the brig.

"You surely would not come back here with Harry, did you once get him safe from off that rock?" exclaimed Rose.

"Why, you know how it is with me, Miss Rose," answered Jack. "*My* business is here, on board the *Swash*, and I must attend to it. Nothing shall tempt me to give up the brig so long as she floats, and sartain folks float in her, unless it might be some such matter as that which happened on the bit of an island at the Dry Tortugas. Ah! he's a willian! But if I do come back, it will be only to get into my own proper berth ag'in, and not to bring Mr. Mulford into the lion's jaws. He will only have to put me back on board the *Molly* here, when he can make the best of his own way to Key West. Half an hour would place him out of harm's way; especially as I happen to know the course Spike means to steer in the morning."

"I will go with you, Jack," said Rose mildly, but with great firmness.

"You, Miss Rose! But why should I show surprise? It's like all the sex, when they have given away their affections. Yes, woman will be woman, put her on a naked rock, or put her in silks and satins in her parlor at home. How different it is with men! They dote for a little while, and turn to a new face. It must be said men's willians!"

"Not Mulford, Jack—no, not Harry Mulford! A truer or a nobler heart never beat in a human breast, and you and I will drown together, rather than he should not be taken from that rock."

"It shall be as you say," answered Jack, a little thoughtfully. "Perhaps it would be best that you should quit the brig altogether. Spike is getting desperate, and you will be safer with the young mate than with so great an old willian. Yes, you shall go with me, Miss Rose: and if Josh and Simon both refuse, we will go alone."

"With you, Jack, but not with Mr. Mulford. I cannot desert my aunt, nor can I quit the *Swash* alone in company with her mate. As for Spike, I despise him too much to fear him. He must soon go into port somewhere, and at the first place where he touches we shall quit him. He dare not detain us—nay, he *cannot*—and I do not fear him. We shall save

Harry, but I shall remain with my aunt."

"We'll see, Miss Rose, we'll see," said Tier, smiling. "Perhaps a handsome young man, like Mr. Mulford, will have better luck in persuading you than an old fellow like me. If he should fail, 'twill be his own fault."

So thought Jack Tier, judging of women as he had found them, but so did not think Rose Budd. The conversation ended here, however, each keeping in view its purport, and the serious business that was before them.

The duty of the vessel went on as usual. The night promised to be cloudy, but not very dark, as there was a moon. When Spike ordered the anchor-watches, he had great care to spare his crew as much as possible, for the next day was likely to be one of great toil to them. He intended to get the schooner up again, if possible; and though he might not actually pump her out so as to cause her to float, enough water was to be removed to enable him to get at the doubloons. The situation of the bread-locker was known, and as soon as the cabin was sufficiently freed from water to enable one to move about in it, Spike did not doubt his being able to get at the gold. With his resources and ingenuity, the matter in his own mind was reduced to one of toil and time. Eight-and-forty hours, and some hard labor, he doubted not would effect all he cared for.

In setting the anchor-watches for the night, therefore, Stephen Spike bethought him as much of the morrow as of the present moment. Don Juan offered to remain on deck until midnight, and as he was as capable of giving an alarm as any one else, the offer was accepted. Josh and Simon were to succeed the Mexican, and to hold the lookout for two hours, when Jack was to relieve them, and to continue on deck until light returned, when he was to give the captain a call. This arrangement made, Tier turned in at once, desiring the cook to call him half an hour before the proper period of his watch commenced. That half hour Jack intended to employ in exercising his eloquence in endeavoring to persuade either Josh or Simon to be of his party. By eight o'clock the vessel lay in a profound quiet, Señor Montefalderon pacing the quarter-deck alone, while the deep breathing of Spike was to be heard issuing through the open window of his stateroom; a window which, it may be well to say to the uninitiated, opened in-board, or toward the deck, and not out-board, or toward the sea.

For four solitary hours did the Mexican pace the deck of the stranger, resting himself for a few minutes at a time only, when wearied with walking. Does the reader fancy that a man so situated had not plenty of occupation for his thoughts? Don Juan Montefalderon was a soldier and a gallant cavalier; and love of country had alone induced him to engage in his present duties. Not that patriotism which looks to political preferment through a popularity purchased by the vulgar acclamation which attends success in arms, even when undeserved, or that patriotism which induces men of fallen characters to endeavor to retrieve former offenses by the shortest and most reckless mode, or that patriotism which shouts "our country right or wrong," regardless alike of God and his eternal laws, that are never to be forgotten with impunity; but the patriotism which would defend his home and fireside, his altars and the graves of his fathers, from the ruthless steps of the invader. We shall not pretend to say how far this gentleman entered into the merits of the quarrel between the two republics, which no arts of European jealousy can ever conceal from the judgment of truth, for, with him, matters had gone beyond the point where men feel the necessity of reasoning, and when, perhaps, if such a condition of the mind is ever to be defended, he found his perfect justification in feeling.

He had traveled, and knew life by observation, and not through traditions and books. He had never believed, therefore, that his countrymen could march to Washington, or even to the Sabine; but he had hoped for better things than had since occurred. The warlike qualities of the Americans of the North, as he was

accustomed to call those who term themselves, *par excellence*, Americans, a name they are fated to retain and to raise high on the scale of national power, and national pre-eminence, unless they fall by their own hands, had taken him by surprise, as they had taken all but those who knew the country well, and who understood its people. Little had he imagined that the small, widely-spread body of regulars, that figured in the blue-books, almanacs, and army-registers of America, as some six or seven thousand men, scattered along frontiers of a thousand leagues in extent, could, at the beck of the government, swell into legions of invaders, men able to carry war to the capitals of his own States, thousands of miles from their own doors, and formidable alike for their energy, their bravery, their readiness in the use of arms, and their numbers. He saw what is perhaps justly called the boasting of the American character vindicated by their exploits; and marches, conquests, and victories that, if sober truth were alone to cover the pages of history, would far outdo in real labor and danger the boasted passage of the Alps under Napoleon, and the exploits that succeeded it.

Don Juan Montefalderon was a grave and thoughtful man, of pure Iberian blood. He might have had about him a little of the exaltation of the Spanish character; the overflowings of a generous chivalry at the bottom; and, under its influence, he may have set too high an estimate on Mexico and her sons, but he was not one to shut his eyes to the truth. He saw plainly that the northern neighbors of his country were a race formidable and enterprising, and that of all the calumnies that had been heaped upon them by rivalries and European superciliousness, that of their not being military by temperament was, perhaps, the most absurd of all. On the contrary, he had himself, though anticipating evil, been astounded by the suddenness and magnitude of their conquests, which in a few short months after the breaking out of hostilities, had overrun regions larger in extent than many ancieht empires. All this had been done, too, not by disorderly and barbarous hordes, seeking in other lands the abundance that was wanting at home, but with system and regularity, by men who had turned the plowshare into the sword for the occasion, quitting abundance to encounter fatigue, famine, and danger. In a word, the Señor Montefalderon saw all the evils that environed his own land, and foresaw others, of a still graver character, that menaced the future. On matters such as these did he brood in his walk, and bitter did he find the minutes of that sad and lonely watch. Although a Mexican, he could feel; although an avowed foe of this good republic of ours, he had his principles, his affections, and his sense of right. Whatever be the merits of the quarrel, and we are not disposed to deny that our provocation has been great, a sense of right should teach every man that what may be patriotic in an American would be exactly the same thing in a Mexican, and that we ought to respect in others sentiments that are so much vaunted among ourselves. Midnight at length arrived, and, calling the cook and steward, the unhappy gentleman was relieved, and went to his berth to dream, in sorrow, over the same pictures of national misfortunes on which, while waking, he had brooded in such deep melancholy.

The watch of Josh and Simon was tranquil, meeting with no interruption until it was time to summon Jack. One thing these men had done, however, that was of some moment to Tier, under a pledge given by Josh, and which had been taken in return for a dollar in hand. They had managed to haul the lighthouse boat alongside, from its position astern, and this so noiselessly, as not to give the alarm to any one. There it lay, when Jack appeared, ready at the main-rigging, to receive him at any moment he might choose to enter it.

A few minutes after Jack appeared on deck, Rose and Biddy came stealthily out of the cabin, the latter carrying a basket filled with bread and broken meat, and not wanting in sundry little delicacies, such as woman's hands prepare, and in this instance, woman's tenderness had provided.

The whole party met at the galley, a place so far removed from the staterooms aft as to be out of ear-shot. Here Jack renewed his endeavors to persuade either Josh or Simon to go in the boat, but without success. The negroes had talked the matter over in their watch, and had come to the conclusion the enterprise was too hazardous.

"I tell you, Jack, you doesn't know Cap'in Spike as well as I does," Josh said, in continuance of the discourse. "No, you doesn't know him at all as well as I does. If he finds out dat anybody has quit dis brig dis werry night, woeful will come! It no good to try to run; I run t'ree time, and Simon here run twice. What good it all do? We got cotched, and here we is, just as fast as ever. I knows Cap'in Spike, and doesn't want to fall in athwart his hawse any more."

"Y-e-s, dat my judgment, too," put in the cook. "We wishes you well, Jack, and we wishes Miss Rose well, and Mr. Mulford well, but we can't, no how, run ath'art hawse, as Josh says. Dat is my judgment, too."

"Well, if your minds are made up to this, my darkies, I s'pose there'll be no changing them," said Jack. "At all ewents, you'll lend us a hand, by answering any hail that may come from aft, in my watch, and in keepin' our secret. There's another thing you can do for us, which may be of sarvice. Should Captain Spike miss the boat, and lay any trap to catch us, you can just light this here bit of lantern and hang it over the brig's bows, where he'll not be likely to see it, that we may know matters are going wrong, and give the craft a wide berth."

"Sartain," said Josh, who entered heartily into the affair, so far as good wishes for its success were concerned, at the very moment when he had a most salutary care of his own back. "Sartain; we do all dat, and no t'ank asked. It no great matter to answer a hail, or to light a lantern and sling him over the bows; and if Captain Spike wants to know who done it, let him find out."

Here both negroes laughed heartily, manifesting so little care to suppress their mirth that Rose trembled lest their noise should awaken Spike. Accustomed sounds, however, seldom produce this effect on the ears of the sleeper, and the heavy breathing from the stateroom succeeded the merriment of the blacks, as soon as the latter ceased. Jack now announced his readiness to depart. Some little care and management were necessary to get into the boat noiselessly, more especially with Biddy. It was done, however, with the assistance of the blacks, who cast off the painter, when Jack gave the boat a shove to clear the brig, and suffered it to drift astern for a considerable distance before he ventured to cast loose the sail.

"I know Spike well," said Jack, in answer to a remonstrance from the impatient Rose concerning his delay; "a single flap of that canvas would wake him up, with the brig anchored, while he would sleep through a salute of heavy guns if it came in regular course. Quick ears has old Stephen, and its best to humor them. In a minute more we'll set our canvas and be off."

All was done as Jack desired, and the boat got away from the brig unheard and undetected. It was blowing a good breeze, and Jack Tier had no sooner got the sail on the boat than away it started at a speed that would have soon distanced Spike in his yawl and with his best oarsmen. The main point was to keep the course, though the direction of the wind was a great assistant. By keeping the wind abeam, Jack thought he should be going toward the rock of Mulford. In one hour, or even less time, he expected to reach it, and he was guided by time, in his calculations, as much as by any other criterion. Previously to quitting the brig, he had gone up a few ratlines of the fore-rigging to take the bearings of the fire on Mulford's rock, but the light was no longer visible. As no star was to be seen, the course was a little vague, but Jack was navigator enough to understand that by keeping on the weather side of the channel he was in the right road, and that his great danger of missing his object was in overrunning it.

So much of the reef was above water

that it was not difficult to steer a boat along its margin. The darkness, to be sure, rendered it a little uncertain how near they were running to the rocks, but, on the whole, Jack assured Rose he had no great difficulty in getting along.

"These trades are almost as good as compasses," he said, "and the rocks are better, if we can keep close aboard them without going on to them. I do not know the exact distance of the spot we seek, from the brig, but I judged it to be about two leagues, as I looked at it from aloft. Now this boat will travel them two leagues in an hour, with this breeze and smooth water."

"I wish you had seen the fire again before we left the brig," said Rose, too anxious for the result not to feel uneasiness on some account or other.

"The mate is asleep, and the fire has burned down; that's the explanation. Besides, fuel is not too plenty on a place like that Mr. Mulford inhabits just now. As we get near the spot I shall look out for embers, which may sarve as a light-house or beacon to guide us into port."

"Mr. Mulford will be charmed to see us, now that we take him wather!" exclaimed Biddy. "Wather is a blessed thing, and it's hard will be the heart that does not fale gratitude for a plenty of swate wather."

"The maty has plenty of food and water where he is," said Jack. "I'll answer for both them sarcumstances. I saw him turn a turtle as plain as if I had been at his elbow, and I saw him drinking at a hole in the rock as heartily as a boy ever pulled at a gimlet-hole in a molasses hogs-head."

"But the distance was so great, Jack, I should hardly think you could have distinguished objects so small."

"I went by the motions altogether. I saw the man, and I saw the movements, and I knowed what the last meant. It's true I couldn't swear to the turtle, though I saw something on the rock that I knowed, by the way in which it was handled, *must* be a turtle. Then I saw the mate kneel, and put his head low, and then I knowed he was drinking."

"Perhaps he prayed," said Rose solemnly.

"Not he. Sailors isn't so apt to pray, Miss Rose; not as apt as they ought to be. Women for prayers, and men for work. Mr. Mulford is no worse than many others, but I doubt if he be much given to *that*."

To this Rose made no answer, but Biddy took the matter up, and as the boat went briskly ahead, she pursued the subject.

"Then more is the shame for him," said the Irishwoman; "and Miss Rose, and missus, and even I prayin' *for* him, all as if he was our own brudder, It's seldom I ask anything for a heretic, but I could not forget a fine young man like Mr. Mulford, and Miss Rose so partial to him, and he in so bad a way. He ought to be ashamed to make his brags that he is too proud to pray."

"Harry has made no such wicked boast," put in Rose, mildly; "nor do we know that he has not prayed for us, as well as for himself. It may all be a mistake of Jack's, you know."

"Yes," added Jack coolly, "it *may* be a mistake, a'ter all, for I was lookin' at the maty six miles off, and through a spy-glass. No one can be sure of anything at such a distance. So overlook the matter, my good Biddy, and carry Mr. Mulford the nice things you've mustered in that basket, all the same as if he was Pope."

"This is a subject we had better drop," Rose quietly observed.

"Anything to oblige you, Miss Rose, though religion is a matter it would do me no harm to talk about once in awhile. It's many a long year since I've had time and opportunity to bring my thoughts to dwell on holy things. Ever since I left my mother's side, I've been a wanderer in my mind as much as in my body."

"Poor Jack! I understand and feel for your sufferings; but a better time will come, when you may return to the habits of your youth, and to the observances of your Church."

"I don't know that, Miss Rose; I don't know that," answered Tier, placing the elbow of his short arm on the seemingly

shorter leg, and bending his head so low as to lean his face on the palms of the hand, an attitude in which he appeared to be suffering keenly through his recollections. "Childhood and innocence never come back to us in this world. What the grave may do, we shall all learn in time."

"Innocence can return to all with repentance, Jack; and the heart that prompts you to do acts as generous as this you are now engaged in must contain some good seed yet."

"If Jack will go to a praste and just confess, when he can find a father, it will do his sowl good," said Biddy who was touched by the mental suffering of the strange little being at her side.

But the necessity of managing the boat soon compelled its cockswain to raise his head, and to attend to his duty. The wind sometimes came in puffs, and at such moments Jack saw that the large sail of the lighthouse boat required watching, a circumstance that induced him to shake off his melancholy, and give his mind more exclusively to the business before him.

As for Rose, she sympathized deeply with Jack Tier, for she knew his history, his origin, the story of his youth, and the well-grounded causes of his contrition and regrets. From her, Jack had concealed nothing, the gentle commiseration of one like Rose being a balm to wounds that had bled for long and bitter years. The great poet of our language, and the greatest that ever lived perhaps, short of the inspired writers of the Old Testament, and old Homer and Dante, has well reminded us that the "little beetle," in yielding its breath, can "feel a pang as great as when a giant dies." Thus is it, too, in morals. Abasement, and misery, and poverty, and sin may, and all do, contribute to lower the tone of our moral existence; but the principle that has been planted by nature can be eradicated by nature only. It exists as long as we exist; and if dormant for a time, under the pressure of circumstances, it merely lies, in the moral system, like the acorn, or the chestnut, in the ground, waiting its time and season to sprout, and bud, and blossom. Should that time never arrive, it is not because the seed is not there, but because it is neglected. Thus was it with the singular being of whose feelings we have just spoken. The germ of goodness had been implanted early in him, and was nursed with tenderness and care, until, self-willed, and governed by passion, he had thrown off the connections of youth and childhood, to connect himself with Spike—a connection that had left him what he was. Before closing our legend, we shall have occasion to explain it.

"We have run our hour, Miss Rose," resumed Jack, breaking a continued silence, during which the boat had passed through a long line of water; "we have run our hour, and ought to be near the rock we are in search of. But the morning is so dark that I fear we shall have difficulty in finding it. It will never do to run past it, and we must haul closer into the reef, and shorten sail, that we may be sartain to make no such mistake."

Rose begged her companion to omit no precaution, as it would be dreadful to fail in their search, after incurring so much risk in their own persons.

"Harry may be sleeping on the seaweed of which you spoke," she added, "and the danger of passing him will be much increased in such a case. What a gloomy and frightful spot is this, in which to abandon a human being! I fear, Jack, that we have come faster than we supposed, and may already have passed the rock."

"I hope not, Miss Rose—it seemed to me a good two leagues to the place where I saw him, and the boat is fast that will run two leagues in an hour."

"We do not know the time, Jack, and are obliged to guess at that as well as at the distance. How very dark it is!"

Dark, in one sense, it was not, though Rose's apprehensions, doubtless, induced her to magnify every evil. The clouds certainly lessened the light of the moon; but there was still enough of the last to enable one to see surrounding objects; and most especially to render distinct the character of the solitude that reigned over the place.

The proximity of the reef, which formed a weather-shore to the boat, prevented anything like a swell on the water, notwithstanding the steadiness and strength of the breeze, which had now blown for near twenty-four hours. The same wind in open water would have raised sea enough to cause a ship to pitch or roll; whereas the lighthouse boat, placed where she was, scarce rose and fell under the undulations of the channel through which she was glancing.

"This is a good boat, and a fast boat, too," observed Jack Tier, after he had luffed up several minutes, in order to make sure of his proximity to the reef; "and it might carry us all safe enough to Key West, or certainly back to the Dry Tortugas, was we inclined to try our hands at either."

"I cannot quit my aunt," said Rose, quickly, "so we will not even think of any such thing."

"No, 'twould never do to abandon the missus," said Biddy, "and she on the wrack wid us, and falin' the want of wather as much as ourselves."

"We three have sartainly gone through much in company," returned Jack, "and it ought to make us friends for life."

"I trust it will, Jack; I hope, when we return to New York, and see you among us, anchored, as you would call it, for the rest of your days under my aunt's roof, or under my own, should I ever have one."

"No, Miss Rose, my business is with the *Swash* and her captain. I shall stick by both, now I've found 'em again, until they once more desart me. A man's duty is *his* duty, and a woman's duty is *her* duty."

"You same to like the brig and her captain, Jack Tier," observed Biddy, "and there's no use in gainsaying such a likin'. What *will* come to pass must come to pass. Captain Spike is a mighty great sailor, anyway."

"He's a willian!" muttered Jack.

"There!" cried Rose, almost breathless, "there is a rock above the water, surely. Do not fly by it so swiftly, Jack, but let us stop and examine it."

"There is a rock, sure enough, and a large piece it is," answered Tier. "We will go alongside of it, and see what it is made of. Biddy shall be boat-keeper, while you and I, Miss Rose, explore."

Jack had thrown the boat into the wind and was shooting close alongside of the reef even while speaking. The party found no difficulty in landing; the margin of the rock admitting the boat to lie close alongside of it, and its surface being even and dry. Jack had brailed the sail, and he brought the painter ashore and fastened it securely to a fragment of stone that made a very sufficient anchor. In addition to this precaution, a lazy painter was put into Biddy's hands, and she was directed not to let go of it while her companions were absent. These arrangements concluded, Rose and Jack commenced a hurried examination of the spot.

A few minutes sufficed to give our adventurers a tolerably accurate notion of the general features of the place on which they had landed. It was a considerable portion of the reef that was usually above water, and which had even some fragments of soil, or sand, on which was a stinted growth of bushes. Of these last, however, there were very few, nor were there many spots of the sand. Driftwood and sea-weed were lodged in considerable quantities about its margin, and, in places, piles of both had been tossed upon the rock itself, by the billows of former gales of wind. Nor was it long before Jack discovered a turtle that had been up to a hillock of sand, probably to deposit its eggs. There was enough of the sportsman in Jack, notwithstanding the business he was on, to turn this animal, though with what object he might have been puzzled himself to say. This exploit effected, Jack followed Rose as fast as his short legs would permit, our heroine pressing forward eagerly, though almost without hope, in order to ascertain if Mulford were there.

"I am afraid this is not the rock," said Rose, nearly breathless with her own haste, when Jack had overtaken her. "I see nothing of him, and we have passed over most of the place."

"Very true, Miss Rose," answered her companion, who was in good-humor on account of his capture of the turtle; "but there are other rocks beside this. Ha! what was that, yonder," pointing with a finger, "here, more toward the brig. As I'm a sinner, there was a flashing as of fire."

"If a fire, it must be that made by Harry. Let us go to the spot at once."

Jack led the way, and, sure enough, he soon reached a place where the embers of what had been a considerable body of fire, were smoldering on the rock. The wind had probably caused some brand to kindle momentarily, which was the object that had caught Tier's eye. No doubt any longer remained of their having found the very place where the mate had cooked his supper, and lighted his beacon, though he himself was not near it. Around these embers were all the signs of Mulford's having made the meal, of which Jack had seen the preparations. A portion of the turtle, much the greater part of it, indeed, lay in its shell; and piles of wood and sea-weed, both dry, had been placed at hand, ready for use. A ship's topgallant-yard, with most of its rope attached, lay with a charred end near the fire, or where the fire had been, the wood having burned until the flames went out for want of contact with other fuel. There were many pieces of boards of pitchpine in the adjacent heap, and two or three beautiful planks of the same wood, entire. In short, from the character and quantity of the materials of this nature that had thus been heaped together, Jack gave it as his opinion that some vessel freighted with lumber had been wrecked to windward, and that the adjacent rocks had been receiving the tribute of her cargo. Wrecks are of very, very frequent occurrence on the Florida Reef; and there are always moments when such gleanings are to be made in some part of it or other.

"I see no better way to give a call to the mate, Miss Rose, than to throw some of this dry weed and some of this lumber on the fire," said Jack, after he had rummaged about the place sufficiently to become master of its condition. "There is plenty of ammunition, and here goes for a broadside."

Jack had no great difficulty in effecting his object. In a few minutes he succeeded in obtaining a flame, and then he fed it with such fragments of the brands and boards as were best adapted to his purpose. The flames extended gradually and by the time Tier had dragged the topgallant-yard over the pile, and placed several planks on their edges, alongside of it, the whole was ready to burst into a blaze. The light was shed athwart the rock for a long distance, and the whole place, which was lately so gloomy and obscure, now became gay, under the bright radiance of a blazing fire.

"There is a beacon-light that might almost be seen on board!" said Jack, exulting in his success. "If the mate is anywhere in this latitude, he will soon turn up."

"I see nothing of him," answered Rose, in a melancholy voice. "Surely, surely, Jack, he cannot have left the rock just as we have come to rescue him!"

Rose and her companion had turned their faces from the fire to look in an opposite direction in quest of him they sought. Unseen by them, a human form advanced swiftly toward the fire, from a point on its other side. It advanced nearer, then hesitated, afterward rushed forward with a tread that caused the two to turn, and at the next moment, Rose was clasped to the heart of Mulford.

CHAPTER XI.

"I might have pass'd that lovely cheek,
Nor, perchance, my heart have left me;
But the sensitive blush that came trembling there,
Of my heart it forever bereft me.
Who could blame had I loved that face,
Ere my eyes could twice explore her;
Yet it is for the fairy intelligence there,
And her warm, warm heart, I adore her."

—WOLFE.

THE stories of the respective parties who had thus so strangely met on that barren and isolated rock, were soon told. Harry confirmed all of Jack's statements as to his own proceedings, and Rose had

little more to say than to add how much her own affections had led her to risk in his behalf. In a word, ten minutes made each fully acquainted with the other's movements. Then Tier considerately retired to the boat, under the pretense of minding it, and seeing everything ready for a departure, but as much to allow the lovers the ten or fifteen minutes of uninterrupted discourse that they now enjoyed, as for any other reason.

It was a strange scene that now offered on the rock. By this time the fire was burning not only brightly, but fiercely, shedding its bright light far and near. Under its most brilliant rays stood Harry and Rose, both smiling and happy, delighted in their meeting, and, for the moment, forgetful of all but their present felicity. Never, indeed, had Rose appeared more lovely than under these circumstances. Her face was radiant with those feelings which had so recently changed from despair to delight—a condition that is ever most propitious to beauty; and charms that always appeared feminine and soft, now seemed elevated to a bright benignancy that might best be likened to our fancied images of angels. The mild, beaming, serene, and intelligent blue eyes, the cheek flushed with happiness, the smiles that came so easily; and were so replete with tenderness, and the rich hair, deranged by the breeze, and moistened by the air of the sea, each and all, perhaps, borrowed some additional luster from the peculiar light under which they were exhibited. As for Harry, happiness had thrown all the disadvantages of exposure, want of dress, and a face that had not felt the razor for six-and-thirty hours, into the background. When he left the wreck, he had cast aside his cap and his light summer jacket, in order that they might not encumber him in swimming, but both had been recovered when he returned with the boat to take off his friends. In his ordinary sea attire, then, he now stood, holding Rose's two hands in front of the fire, every garment clean and white as the waters of the ocean could make them, but all betraying some of the signs of his recent trials. His fine countenance was full of the love he bore for the intrepid and devoted girl who had risked so much in his behalf; and a painter might have wished to preserve the expression of ardent, manly admiration which glowed in his face, answering to the gentle sympathy and womanly tenderness it met in that of Rose.

The background of this picture was the wide, even surface of the coral reef, with its exterior setting of the dark and gloomy sea. On the side of the channel, however, appeared the boat, already winded, with Biddy still on the rock, looking kindly at the lovers by the fire, while Jack was holding the painter, beginning to manifest a little impatience at the delay.

"They'll stay there an hour, holding each other's hands, and looking into each other's faces," half grumbled the little, rotund, assistant steward, anxious to be on his way back to the brig, "onless a body gives 'em a call. Captain Spike will be in no very good-humor to receive you and me on board ag'in, if he should find out what sort of a trip we've been making hereaway."

"Let 'em alone—let 'em alone, Jacky," answered the good-natured and kind-hearted Irish woman. "It's happy they bees, jist now, and it does my eyes good to look at 'em."

"Ay, they're happy enough, *now;* I only hope it may last."

"Last! what should help its lasting? Miss Rose is so good, and so handsome—and she's a fortin', too; and the mate so nice a young man. Think of the likes of them, Jack, wantin' the blessed gift of wather, and all within one day and two nights. Sure it's Providence that takes care of us, and not we ourselves! Kings on their thrones isn't as happy as *them* at this moment."

"Men's willians!" growled Jack; "and more fools women for trustin' 'em!"

"Not sich a nice young man as our mate, Jacky; no, not he. Now the mate of the ship I came from Liverpool in, this time ten years agone, he was a villain. He grudged us our potaties, and our own bread; and he grudged us every dhrap of swate wather that went into our mouths. Call him a villain, if you will, Jack; but

niver call the likes of Mr. Mulford by so hard a name."

"I wish him well, and nothing else; and for that very reason must put a stop to his looking so fondly into that young woman's face. Time won't stand still, Biddy, to suit the wishes of lovers; and Stephen Spike is a man not to be trifled with. Halloo there, maty! It's high time to think of getting under way."

At this summons both Harry and Rose started, becoming aware of the precious moments they were losing. Carrying a large portion of the turtle, the former moved toward the craft, in which all were seated in less than three minutes, with the sail loose, and the boat in motion. For a few moments the mate was so much occupied with Rose, that he did not advert to the course; but one of his experience could not long be misled on such a point, and he turned suddenly to Tier, who was steering, to remonstrate.

"How's this, Jack?" cried Mulford; "you've got the boat's head the wrong way!"

"Not I, sir. She's heading for the brig as straight as she can go. The wind favors us on both legs; and it's lucky it does, for 'twill be hard on upon daylight afore we are alongside of her. You'll want half an hour of dark, at the very least, to get a good start of the *Swash*, in case she makes sail a'ter you."

"Straight for the brig! what have we to do with the brig? Our course is for Key West, unless it might be better to run down before the wind to the Dry Tortugas again, and look for the sloop-of-war. Duty, and perhaps my own safety, tells me to let Captain Mull know what Spike is about with the *Swash;* and I shall not hesitate a moment about doing it, after all that has passed. Give me the helm, Jack, and let us wear short round on our heel."

"Never, master maty, never. I must go back to the brig. Miss Rose, there, knows that my business is with Stephen Spike, and with him only."

"And I must return to my aunt, Harry," put in Rose, herself. "It would never do for me to desert my aunt, you know."

"And I have been taken from that rock, to be given up to the tender mercies of Spike again?"

This was said in surprise rather than in a complaining way; and it at once induced Rose to tell the young man the whole of their project.

"Never, Harry, never," she said, firmly. "It is our intention to return to the brig ourselves, and let you escape in the boat afterward. Jack Tier is of opinion this can be done without much risk, if we use proper caution, and do not lose too much time. On no account would I consent to place you in the hands of Spike again—death would be preferable to that, Harry!"

"And on no account can or will I consent to place *you* again in the hands of Spike, Rose," answered the young man. "Now that we know his intentions, such an act would be almost impious."

"Remember my aunt, dear Harry. What would be her situation in the morning when she found herself deserted by her niece and Biddy—by me whom she has nursed and watched from childhood, and whom she loves so well?"

"I shall not deny your obligations to your aunt, Rose, and your duty to her under ordinary circumstances. But these are not ordinary circumstances; and it would be courting the direst misfortunes, nay, almost braving Providence, to place yourself in the hands of that scoundrel again, now that you are clear of them."

"Spike's a willian!" muttered Jack.

"And my desartin' the missus would be a sin that no praste would overlook aisily," put in Biddy. "When Miss Rose told me of this v'y'ge that she meant to make in the boat wid Jack Tier, I asked to come along that I might take care of her and see that there was plenty of wather; but ill-luck befall me if I would have t'ought of sich a thing, and the missus desarted."

"We can then run alongside of the brig and put Biddy and Jack on board of her," said Mulford, reflecting a moment on what had just been said, "when you and I can make the best of our way to Key West, where the means of sending government

vessels out after the *Swash* will soon offer. In this way we can not only get our friends out of the lion's jaws, but keep out of them ourselves."

"Reflect a moment, Harry," said Rose, in a low voice, but not without tenderness in its tones; "it would not do for me to go off alone with you in this boat."

"Not when you have confessed your willingness to go over the wide world with me, Rose—with me, and with me only?"

"Not even then, Harry. I know you will think better of this when your generous nature has time to reason with your heart, on my account."

"I can only answer in your own words, Rose—never. If you return to the *Swash*, I shall go on board with you, and throw defiance into the very teeth of Spike. I know the men do not dislike me, and, perhaps, assisted by Señor Montefalderon, and a few friends among the people, I can muster a force that will prevent my being thrown into the sea."

Rose burst into tears, and then succeeded many minutes, during which Mulford was endeavoring, with manly tenderness, to soothe her. As soon as our heroine recovered her self-command, she began to discuss the matter at issue betwen them more coolly. For half an hour everything was urged by each that feeling, affection, delicacy, or distrust of Spike could well urge, and Mulford, was slowly getting the best of the argument, as well he might, the truth being mostly on his side. Rose was bewildered, really feeling a strong reluctance to quit her aunt, even with so justifiable a motive, but principally shrinking from the appearance of going off alone in a boat, and almost in the open sea, with Mulford. Had she loved Harry less her scruples might not have been so active, but the consciousness of the strength of her attachment, as well as her fixed intention to become his wife the moment it was in her power to give him her hand, with the decencies of her sex, contributed strangely to prevent her yielding to the young man's reasoning. On the subject of the aunt, the mate made out so good a case, that it was apparent to all in the boat that Rose would have to abandon that ground of refusal. Spike had no object to gain by ill-treating Mrs. Budd; and the probability certainly was that he would get rid of her as soon as he could, and in the most easy manner. This was so apparent to all, that Harry had little difficulty in getting Rose to assent to its probability. But there remained the reluctance to go off alone with the mate in a boat. This part of the subject was more difficult to manage than the other; and Mulford betrayed as much by the awkwardness with which he managed it. At length the discussion was brought to a close by Jack Tier suddenly saying:

"Yonder is the brig; and we are heading for her as straight as if she was the pole, and the keel of this boat was a compass. I see how it is, Miss Rose, and a'ter all, I must give in. I suppose some other opportunity will offer for me to get on board of the brig ag'in, and I'll trust to that. If you won't go off with the mate alone, I suppose you'll not refuse to go off in my company."

"Will you accompany us, Jack? This is more than I had hoped for! Yes, Harry, if Jack Tier will be of the party, I will trust my aunt to Biddy, and go with you to Key West, in order to escape from Spike."

This was said so rapidly and so unexpectedly as to take Mulford completely by surprise. Scarce believing what he heard, the young man was disposed, at first, to feel hurt, though a moment's reflection showed him that he ought to rejoice in the result, let the cause be what it might.

"More than I hoped for!" he could not refrain from repeating, a little bitterly; "is Jack Tier, then, of so much importance that *his* company is thought preferable to mine?"

"Hush, Harry!" said Rose, laying her hand on Mulford's arm, by way of strengthening her appeal. "Do not say *that*. You are ignorant of circumstances; at another time you shall know them, but not now. Let it be enough, for the present, that I promise to accompany you if Jack will be of our party."

"Ay, ay, Miss Rose, I will be of the party, seeing there is no other way of getting the lamb out of the jaws of the wolf. After all, it may be the wisest thing I can do, though back to the *Swash* I must and *will* come, powder or no powder, treason or no treason, at the first opportunity. Yes, *my* business is with the *Molly*, and to the *Molly* I shall return. It's lucky, Miss Rose, since you have made up your mind to ship for this new cruise, that I bethought me of telling Biddy to make up a bundle of duds for you. This carpet-bag has a change or two in it, and all owing to my forethought. Your woman said, 'Miss Rose will come back wid us, Jack, and what's the use of rumplin' the clothes for a few hours' sail in the boat;' but I knew womankind better, and foreseed that if master mate fell in alongside of you ag'in, you would not be apt to part company very soon."

"I thank you, Jack, for the provision made for my comfort; though some money would have added to it materially. My purse has a little gold in it, but a very little, and I fear you are not much better off, Harry. It will be awkward to find ourselves in Key West penniless."

"We shall not be quite that. I left the brig absolutely without a cent, but foreseeing that necessity might make them of use, I borrowed half a dozen of the doubloons from the bag of Señor Montefalderon, and, fortunately, they are still in my pocket. All I am worth in the world is in a bag of half-eagles, rather more than a hundred altogether, which I left in my chest, in my own stateroom aboard the brig."

"You'll find that in the carpet-bag, too, master mate," said Jack, coolly.

"Find what, man — not my money surely."

"Ay, every piece of it. Spike broke into your chest this a'ternoon, and made me hold the tools while he was doing it. He found the bag, and overhauled it—a hundred and seven half, eleven quarter, and one full-grown eagle, was the count. When he had done the job, he put all back ag'in, a'ter giving me a full-grown eagle for my share of the plunder and told me to say nothing of what I had seen. I did say nothing, but I did a good bit of work, for, while he was at supper, I confiscated that bag, as they call it—and you will find it there among Miss Rose's clothes, with the fuller grown gentleman back in his nest ag'in."

"This is being not only honest, Tier," cried Mulford, heartily, "but thoughtful. One half of that money shall be yours for this act."

"I thank'ee, sir; but I'll not touch a cent of it. It came hard, I know, Mr. Mulford; for my own hands have smarted too much with tar, not to know that the seaman 'earns his money like the horse.'"

"Still it would not be 'spending it like an ass,' Jack, to give you a portion of mine. But there will be other opportunities to talk of this. It is a sign of returning to the concerns of life, Rose, that money begins to be of interest to us. How little did we think of the doubloons, or half-eagles, a few hours since, when on the wreck!"

"It was wather that we t'ought of then," put in Biddy. "Goold is good in a market, or in town, or to send back to Ireland, to help a body's aged fader or mudder in comfort wid; but wather is the blessed thing on a wrack!"

"The brig is coming quite plainly into view, and you had better give me the helm, Jack. It is time to bethink us of the manner of approaching her, and how we are to proceed when alongside."

This was so obviously true, that everybody felt disposed to forget all other matters, in order to conduct the proceedings of the next twenty minutes with the necessary prudence and caution. When Mulford first took the helm, the brig was just coming clearly into view, though still looking a little misty and distant. She might then have been half a league distant, and would not have been visible at all by that light, but for the circumstance that she had no background to swallow up her outlines. Drawn against the clouds, above which the rays of the moon were shed, her tracery was to be discerned, however, and, minute by minute, it was getting to be more and more distinct, un-

til it was now so plainly to be seen as to admonish the mate of the necessity of preparation in the manner mentioned.

Tier now communicated to the mate his own proposed manner of proceeding. The brig tended to the trades, the tides having very little influence on her, in the bight of the reef where she lay. As the wind stood about east-southeast, the brig's stern pointed to about west-northwest, while the boat was coming down the passage from a direction nearly north from her, having, as a matter of course, the wind just free enough to lay her course. Jack's plan was to pass the brig to windward, and having got well on her bow, to brail the sail and drift down upon her, expecting to fall in alongside, abreast of the fore-chains, into which he intended to help Biddy, and to ascend himself, when he supposed that Mulford would again make sail, and carry off his mistress. To this scheme the mate objected that it was awkward, and a little lubberly. He substituted one in its place that differed in seamanship, and which was altogether better. Instead of passing to windward, Mulford suggested the expediency of approaching to leeward, and of coming alongside under the open bowport, letting the sheet fly and brailing the sail, when the boat should be near enough to carry her to the point of destination without further assistance from her canvas.

Jack Tier took his officer's improvement on his own plan in perfect good part, readily and cheerfully expressing his willingness to aid in the execution of it all that lay in his power. As the boat sailed unusually well, there was barely time to explain to each individual his or her part in the approaching critical movements, ere the crisis itself drew near; then each of the party became silent and anxious, and events were regarded rather than words.

It is scarcely necessary to say that Mulford sailed a boat well. He held the sheet in his hand, as the little craft came up under the lee-quarter of the brig, while Jack stood by the brail. The eyes of the mate glanced over the hull of the vessel to ascertain, if possible, who might be stirring; but not a sign of life could he detect on board her. This very silence made Mulford more distrustful and anxious, for he feared a trap was set for him. He expected to see the head of one of the blacks at least peering over the bulwarks, but nothing like a man was visible. It was too late to pause, however, and the sheet was slowly eased off, Jack hauling on the brail at the same time; the object being to prevent the sail's flapping, and the sound reaching the ears of Spike. As Mulford used great caution, and had previously schooled Jack on the subject, this important point was successfully achieved. Then the mate put his helm down, and the boat shot up under the brig's lee-bow. Jack was ready to lay hold of one of the bowsprit shrouds, and presently the boat was breasted up under the desired port, and secured in that position. Mulford quitted the sternsheets, and cast a look in upon deck. Nothing was to be seen, though he heard the heavy breathing of the blacks, both of whom were sound asleep on a sail that they had spread on the forecastle.

The mate whispered for Biddy to come to the port. This the Irishwoman did at once, having kissed Rose, and taken her leave of her previously. Tier also came to the port, through which he passed, getting on deck with a view to assist Biddy, who was awkward, almost as a matter of course, to pass through the same opening. He had just succeeded, when the whole party was startled, some of them petrified, indeed, by a hail from the quarter-deck, in the well-known, deep tones of Spike.

"For'ard, there?" hailed the captain. Receiving no answer, he immediately repeated, in a shorter, quicker call, "Forecastle, there?"

"Sir," answered Jack Tier, who by this time had come to his senses.

"Who has the lookout on that forecastle?"

"I have it, sir — I, Jack Tier. You know, sir, I was to have it from two till daylight."

"Ay, ay, I remember now. How does the brig ride to her anchor?"

"As steady as a church, sir. She's had no more sheer the whole watch than if she was moored head and stern."

"Does the wind stand as it did?"

"No change, sir. As dead a trade-wind as ever blowed."

"What hard breathing is that I hear for'ard?"

"'Tis the two niggers, sir. They've turned in on deck, and are napping it off at the rate of six knots. There's no keepin' way with a nigger in snorin'."

"I thought I heard loud whispering, too, but I suppose it was a sort of half dream. I'm often in that way, nowadays, Jack!"

"Sir."

"Go to the scuttle-butt and get me a pot of fresh water—my coppers are hot with hard thinking."

Jack did as ordered, and soon stood beneath the coach-house-deck with Spike, who had come out of his stateroom, heated and uneasy at he knew not what. The captain drank a full pint of water at a single draught.

"That's refreshing," he said, returning Jack the tin-pot, "and I feel the cooler for it. How much does it want of daylight, Jack?"

"Two hours, I think, sir. The order was passed to me to have all hands called as soon as it was broad day."

"Ay, that is right. We must get our anchor and be off as soon as there is light to do it in. Doubloons may melt as well as flour, and are best cared for soon, when cared for at all."

"I shall see and give the call as soon as it is day. I hope, Captain Spike, I can take the liberty of an old shipmate, however, and say one thing to you, which is this—look out for the *Poughkeepsie*, which is very likely to be on your heels when you least expect her.

"That's your way of thinking, is it, Jack? Well, I thank you, old one, for the hint, but have little fear of that craft. We've had our legs together, and I think the brig has the longest."

As the captain said this, he gaped like a hound, and went into his stateroom. Jack lingered on the quarter-deck waiting to hear him fairly in his berth, when he made a sign to Biddy, who had got as far aft as the galley, where she was secreted, to pass down into the cabin as silently as possible. In a minute or two more, he moved forward, singing in a low, cracked voice, as was often his practice, and slowly made his way to the forecastle. Mulford was just beginning to think the fellow had changed his mind, and meant to stick by the brig, when the little rotund figure of the assistant-steward was seen passing through the port, and to drop noiselessly on a thwart. Jack then moved to the bow, and cast off the painter, the head of the boat slowly falling off under the pressure of the breeze on that part of her mast and sail which rose above the hull of the *Swash*. Almost at the same moment the mate let go the stern fast, and the boat was free.

It required some care to set the sails without the canvas flapping. It was done, however, before the boat fairly took the breeze, when all was safe. In half a minute the wind struck the sail, and away the little craft started, passing swiftly ahead of the brig. Soon as far enough off, Mulford put up his helm and wore short round, bringing the boat's head to the northward, or in its proper direction; after which they flew along before the wind, which seemed to be increasing in force, with a velocity that really appeared to defy pursuit. All this time the brig lay in its silence and solitude, no one stirring on board her, and all, in fact, Biddy alone excepted, profoundly ignorant of what had just been passing alongside of her. Ten minutes of running off with a flowing sheet caused the *Swash* to look indistinct and hazy again; in ten minutes more she was swallowed up, hull, spars, and all, in the gloom of night.

Mulford and Rose now felt something like that security, without the sense of which happiness itself is but an uneasy feeling, rendering the anticipations of evil the more painful by the magnitude of the stake. There they sat, now, in the stern-sheets by themselves, Jack Tier having placed himself near the bows of the boat, to look out for rocks, as well as to trim

the craft. It was not long before Rose was leaning on Harry's shoulder, and ere an hour was passed, she had fallen into a sweet sleep in that attitude, the young man having carefully covered her person with a capacious shawl, the same that had been used on the wreck. As for Jack, he maintained his post in silence, sitting with his arms crossed, and the hands thrust into the breast of his jacket, sailor-fashion, a picture of nautical vigilance. It was some time after Rose had fallen asleep, that this singular being spoke for the first time.

"Keep her away a bit, maty," he said, "keep her away, half a point or so. She's been travelin' like a racer since we left the brig; and yonder's the first streak of day."

"By the time we have been running," observed Mulford, "I should think we must be getting near the northern side of the reef."

"All of that, sir, depend on it. Here's a rock close aboard on us, to which we're comin' fast—just off here, on our weather bow, that looks to me like the place where you landed a'ter the swim, and where we had stowed ourselves when Stephen Spike made us out, and gave chase."

"It is surprising to me, Jack, that you should have any fancy to stick by a man of Spike's character. He is a precious rascal, as we all can see now, and you are rather an honest sort of fellow.'

"Do you love the young woman there, that's lying in your arms, as it might be, and whom you say you wish to marry?"

"The question is a queer one, but it is easily answered. More than my life, Jack."

"Well, how happens it that *you* succeed, when the world has so many other young men who might please her as well as yourself."

"It may be that no other loves her as well, and she has had the sagacity to discover it."

"Quite likely. So it is with me and Stephen Spike. I fancy a man whom other folks despise and condemn. *Why* I stand by him is my own secret; but stand by him I do and will."

"This is all very strange, after your conduct on the island, and your conduct to-night. I shall not disturb your secret, however, Jack, but leave you to enjoy it by yourself. Is this the rock of which you spoke, that we are now passing?"

"The same; and there's the spot in which we was stowed when they made us out from the brig; and hereaway, a cable's length, more or less, the wreck of that Mexican craft must be."

"What is that rising above the water, thereaway, Jack; more on our weather-beam?"

"I see what you mean, sir; it looks like a spar. By George! there's two on 'em; and they *do* seem to be the schooner's masts."

Sure enough! a second look satisfied Mulford that two mastheads were out of the water, and that within a hundred yards of the place the boat was running past. Standing on a short distance, or far enough to give himself room, the mate put his helm down, and tacked the boat. The flapping of the sail, and the little movement of shifting over the sheet, awoke Rose, who was immediately apprised of the discovery. As soon as round, the boat went glancing up to the spars, and presently was riding by one, Jack Tier having caught hold of a top-mast-shroud, when Mulford let fly his sheet again, and luffed short up to the spot. By this time the increasing light was sufficiently strong to render objects distinct, when near by, and no doubt remained any longer in the mind of Mulford about the two mastheads being those of the unfortunate Mexican schooner.

"Well, of all I have ever seed, I've never seed the like of this afore!" exclaimed Jack. "When we left this here craft, sir, you'll remember, she had almost turned turtle, laying over so far as to bring her upper coamings under water; now she stands right side up, as erect as if docked! My navigation can't get along with this, Mr. Mulford, and it does seem like witchcraft."

"It is certainly a very singular incident, Jack, and I have been trying to come at its causes."

"Have you succeeded, Harry?" asked Rose, by this time wide awake, and wondering like the others.

"It must have happened in this wise. The wreck was abandoned by us some little distance out here, to windward. The schooner's masts, of course, pointed to leeward, and when she drifted in here, they have first touched on a shelving rock, and as they have been shoved up, little by little, they have acted as levers to right the hull, until the cargo has shifted back into its proper berth, which has suddenly set the vessel up again."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Jack, "all that might have happened had she been above water, or any part of her above water; but you'll remember, maty, that soon after we left her she went down."

"Not entirely. The wreck settled in the water no faster after we had left it than it had done before. It continued to sink, inch by inch, as the air escaped, and no faster after it had gone entirely out of sight than before; not as fast, indeed, as the water became denser the lower it got. The great argument against my theory is the fact that after the hull got beneath the surface, the wind could not act on it. This is true in one sense, and not in another. The waves, or the pressure of the water produced by the wind, might act on the hull for some time after we ceased to see it. But the currents have set the craft in here, and the hull floating always, very little force would cant the craft. If the rock were shelving and slippery, I see no great difficulty in the way; and the barrels may have been so lodged, that a trifle would set them rolling back again, each one helping to produce a change that would move another. As for the ballast, that, I am certain, could not shift, for it was stowed with great care. As the vessel righted, the air still in her moved, and as soon as the water permitted it, escaped by the hatches, when the craft went down, as a matter of course. This air may have aided in bringing the hull upright by its movements in the water."

This was the only explanation to which the ingenuity of Mulford could help him, under the circumstances, and it may have been the right one or not. There lay the schooner, however, in some five or six fathoms of water, with her two topmasts and lower mastheads out of the element, as upright as if docked! It may all have occurred as the mate fancied, or the unusual incident may have been owing to some of the many mysterious causes which baffle inquiry, when the agents are necessarily hidden from examination.

"Spike intends to come and look for this wreck, you tell me, Jack, in the hope of getting at the doubloons it contains?" said Mulford, when the boat had lain a minute or two longer, riding by the masthead.

"Ay, ay, sir; that's his notion, sir, and he'll be in a great stew, as soon as he turns out, which must be about this time, and finds me missing; for I was to pilot him to the spot."

"He'll want no pilot now. It will scarcely be possible to pass anywhere near this and not see these spars. But this discovery almost induces me to change my own plans. What say *you*, Rose? We have now reached the northern side of the reef, when it is time to haul close by the wind, if we wish to beat up to Key West. There is a moral certainty, however, that the sloop-of-war is somewhere in the neighborhood of the Dry Tortugas, which are the most easily reached, being to leeward. We might run down to the lighthouse by mid-day, while it is doubtful if we could reach the town until to-morrow morning. I should like exceedingly to have five minutes' conversation with the commander of the *Poughkeepsie*."

"Ay, to let him know where he will be likely to fall in with the *Molly Swash* and her traitor master, Stephen Spike," cried Tier. "Never mind, maty; let 'em come on; both the *Molly* and her master have got long legs and clean heels. Stephen Spike will show 'em how to thread the channels of a reef."

"It is amazing to me, Jack, that you should stand by your old captain in feeling while you are helping to thwart him all you can in his warmest wishes."

"He's a willian!" muttered Jack—"a reg'lar willian is Stephen Spike!"

"If a villain, why do you so evidently wish to keep him out of the hands of the law? Let him be captured and punished, as his crimes require."

"Men's willians, all round," still muttered Jack. "Hark'ee, Mr. Mulford, I've sailed in the brig longer than you, and know'd her in her comeliest and best days—when she was young, and blooming, and lovely to the eye, as the young creature at your side—and it would go to my heart to have anything happen *her*. Then I've know'd Stephen a long time, too, and old shipmates get a feelin' for each other, sooner or later. I tell you now, honestly, Mr. Mulford, Captain Adam Mull shall never make a prisoner of Stephen Spike, if I can prevent it."

The mate laughed at this sally, but Rose appeared anxious to change the conversation, and she managed to open a discussion on the course it might be best to steer. Mulford had several excellent reasons to urge for wishing to run down to the islet, all of which, with a single exception, he laid before his betrothed. The concealed reason was one of the strongest of them all, as usually happens when there is a reason to conceal, but of that he took care to say nothing. The result was an acquiescence on the part of Rose, whose consent was yielded more to the influence of one particular consideration than to all the rest united. That one was this: Harry had pointed out to her the importance to himself of his appearing early to denounce the character and movements of the brig, lest, through his former situation in her, his own conduct might be seriously called in question.

As soon as the matter was determined, Jack was told to let go his hold, the sheet was drawn aft, and away sped the boat. No sooner did Mulford cause the little craft to keep away, than it almost flew, as if conscious it was bound to its proper home, skimming swiftly over the waves, like a bird returning eagerly to its nest. An hour later the party breakfasted. While at this meal, Jack Tier pointed out to the mate a white speck in the southeastern board, which he took to be the brig coming through the passage, on her way to the wreck.

"No matter," returned the mate. "Though we can see her, she cannot see us. There is that much advantage in our being small, Rose, if it do prevent our taking exercise by walking the deck."

Soon after Mulford made a very distant sail in the northwestern board, which he hoped might turn out to be the *Poughkeepsie*. It was but another speck, but its position was somewhat like that in which he had expected to meet the sloop-of-war. The two vessels were so far apart that one could not be seen from the other, and there was little hope that the *Poughkeepsie* would detect Spike at his toil on the wreck; but the mate fully expected that the ship would go into the anchorage, among the islets, in order to ascertain what had become of the schooner. If she did not go in herself, she would be almost certain to send in a boat.

The party from the brigantine had run down before the wind more than two hours before the lighthouse began to show itself, just rising out of the waves. This gave them the advantage of a beacon, Mulford having steered hitherto altogether by the sun, the direction of the wind, and the trending of the reef. Now he had his port in sight, it being his intention to take possession of the dwelling of the lighthouse keeper, and to remain in it until a favorable opportunity occurred to remove Rose to Key West. The young man had also another important project in view, which it will be in season to mention as it reaches the moment of its fulfillment.

The rate of sailing of the lighthouse boat, running before a brisk trade wind, could not be much less than nine miles in the hour. About eleven o'clock, therefore, the lively craft shot through one of the narrow channels of the islets, and entered the haven. In a few minutes all three of the adventurers were on the little wharf where the lighthouse people were in the habit of landing. Rose proceeded to the house, while Harry and Jack remained to secure the boat. For

the latter purpose a sort of slip, or little dock, had been made, and when the boat was hauled into it, it lay so snug that not only was the craft secure from injury, but it was actually hid from the view of all but those who stood directly above it.

"This is a snug berth for the boat, Jack," observed the mate, when he had hauled it into the place mentioned, "and by unstepping the mast, a passer-by would not suspect such a craft of lying in it. Who knows what occasion there may be for concealment? and I'll e'en do that thing."

To a casual listener, Harry, in unstepping the mast, might have seemed influenced merely by a motiveless impulse; but in truth, a latent suspicion of Jack's intentions instigated him; and as he laid the mast, sprit, and sail on the thwarts, he determined, in his own mind, to remove them all to some other place, as soon as an opportunity for doing so unobserved should occur. He and Jack now followed Rose to the house.

The islets were found deserted and tenantless. Not a human being had entered the house since Rose left it, the evening she had remained so long ashore in company with her aunt and the Señor Montefalderon. This our heroine knew from the circumstance of finding a slight fastening of the outer door in the precise situation in which she had left it with her own hands. At first a feeling of oppression and awe prevailed with both Harry and Rose, when they recollected the fate of those who had so lately been tenants of the place; but this gradually wore off, and each soon got to be more at home. As for Jack, he very coolly rummaged the lockers, as he called the drawers and closets of the place, and made his preparations for cooking a very delicious repast, in which *calipash* and *calipee* were to be material ingredients. The necessary condiments were easily enough found in that place, turtle being a common dish there, and it was not long before steams that might have quickened the appetite of an alderman filled the kitchen. Rose rummaged too, and found a clean tablecloth, plates, glasses, bowls, spoons and knives; in a word, all that was necessary to spread a plain but plentiful board. While all this was doing, Harry took some fishing-tackle and proceeded to a favorable spot among the rocks. In twenty minutes he returned with a fine mess of that most delicious little fish that goes by the very unpoetical name of "hog-fish," from the circumstance of its giving a grunt not unlike that of a living porker, when rudely drawn from its proper element. Nothing was now wanting to not only a comfortable, but to what was really a most epicurean meal, and Jack just begged the lovers to have patience for an hour or so, when he promised them dishes that even New York could not furnish.

Harry and Rose first retired to pay a little attention to their dress, and then they joined each other in a walk. The mate had found some razors, and was clean shaved. He had also sequestered a shirt, and made some other little additions to his attire that contributed to give him the appearance of being that which he really was, a very gentleman-like-looking young sailor. Rose had felt no necessity for taking liberties with the effects of others, though a good deal of female attire was found in the dwelling. As was afterward ascertained, a family ordinarily dwelt there, but most of it had gone to Key West, on a visit, at the moment when the man and boy left in charge had fallen into the hands of the Mexicans, losing their lives in the manner mentioned.

While walking together Harry opened his mind to Rose on the subject which lay nearest to his heart, and which had been at the bottom of this second visit to the islets of the Dry Tortugas. During the different visits of Wallace to the brig, the boat's crew of the *Poughkeepsie* had held more or less discourse with the people of the *Swash*. This usually happens on such occasions; and although Spike had endeavored to prevent it when his brig lay in this bay, he had not been entirely successful. Such discourse is commonly jocular, and sometimes witty; every speech, coming from which side it may, ordinarily commencing with "shipmate," though

the interlocutors never saw each other before that interview. In one of the visits an allusion was made to cargo, when "the pretty gal aft" was mentioned as being a part of the cargo of the *Swash*. In answer to this remark, the wit of the *Poughkeepsie* had told the brig's man, "you had better send her on board us, *for we carry a chaplain, a regular-built one, that will be a bishop some day or other, perhaps*, and we can get her spliced to one of our young officers." This remark had induced the sailor of the *Molly* to ask if a sloop-of-war really carried such a piece of marine luxury as a chaplain, and the explanation given went to say that the clergyman in question did not properly belong to the *Poughkeepsie*, but was to be put on board a frigate as soon as they fell in with one that he named.

Now all this Mulford overheard, and he remembered it at a moment when it might be of use. Situated as he and Rose were, he felt the wisdom and propriety of their being united, and his present object was to persuade his companion to be of the same way of thinking. He doubted not that the sloop-of-war would come in erelong, perhaps that very day, and he believed it would be an easy matter to induce her chaplain to perform the ceremony. America is a country where every facility exists, with the fewest possible impedients, to getting married; and, we regret to be compelled to add, to getting unmarried also. There are no bans, no licenses, no consent of parents even, usually necessary, and persons who are of the age of discretion, which, as respects females and matrimony, is a very tender age indeed, may be married, if they see fit, almost without form or ceremony. There existed, therefore, no legal impediment to the course Mulford desired to take, and his principal, if not his only difficulty, would be with Rose. Over her scruples he hoped to prevail, and not without reason, as the case he could and did present was certainly one of a character that entitled him to be heard with great attention.

In the first place, Mrs. Budd had approved of the connection, and it was understood between them that the young people were to be united at the first port in which a clergyman of their own persuasion could be found, and previously to reaching home. This had been the aunt's own project; for, weak and silly as she was, the relict had a woman's sense of the proprieties. It had occurred to her that it would be more respectablo to make the long journey which lay before them escorted by a nephew and husband, than escorted by even an accepted lover. It is true that she had never anticipated a marriage in a lighthouse, and under the circumstances in which Rose was now placed, though it might be more reputable that her niece should quit the islets as the wife of Harry than as his betrothed. Then Mulford still apprehended Spike. In that remote part of the world, almost beyond the confines of society, it was not easy to foretell what claims he might set up, in the event of his meeting them there. Armed with the authority of a husband, Mulford could resist him, in any such case, with far better prospects of success than if he should appear only in the character of a suitor.

Rose listened to these arguments, ardently and somewhat eloquently put, as a girl of her years and habits would be apt to listen to a favored lover. She was much too sincere to deny her own attachment, which the events of the last few days had increased almost to intenseness, so apt is our tenderness to augment in behalf of those for whom we feel solicitude; and her judgment told her that the more sober part of Harry's reasoning was entitled to consideration. As his wife, her situation would certainly be much less equivocal and awkward than while she bore a different name, and was admitted to be a single woman; and it might yet be weeks before the duty she owed her aunt would allow her to proceed to the north. But, after all, Harry prevailed more through the influence of his hold on Rose's affections, as would have been the case with almost every other woman, than through any force of reasoning. He truly loved, and that made

him eloquent when he spoke of love, sympathy in all he uttered being his great ally. When summoned to the house by the call of Jack, who announced that the turtle-soup was ready, they returned with the understanding that the chaplain of the *Poughkeepsie* should unite them, did the vessel come in, and would the functionary mentioned consent to perform the ceremony.

"It would be awkward—nay, it would be distressing, Harry, to have him refuse," said the blushing Rose, as they walked slowly back to the house, more desirous to prolong their conversation than to partake of the bountiful provision of Jack Tier. The latter could not but be acceptable, nevertheless, to a young man like Mulford, who was in robust health, and who had fared so badly for the last eight-and-forty hours. When he sat down to the table, therefore, which was covered by a snow-white cloth, with smoking and most savory viands on it, it will not be surprising if we say it was with a pleasure that was derived from one of the great necessities of our nature.

Sancho calls for benedictions "on the man who invented sleep." It would have been more just to have asked this boon in behalf of him who invented eating and turtle-soup. The wearied fall into sleep, as it might be, unwittingly; sometimes against their will, and often against their interests; while many a man is hungry without possessing the means of appeasing his appetite. Still more daily feel hungry without possessing turtle-soup. Certain persons impute this delicious compound to the genius of some London alderman, but we rather think unjustly. Aldermanic genius is easily excited and rendered active, no doubt, by strong appeals on such a theme, but our own experience inclines us to believe that the tropics usually send their inventions to the less fruitful regions of the earth along with their products. We have little doubt, could the fact be now ascertained, that it would be found turtle-soup was originally invented by just some such worthy as Jack Tier, who, in filling his coppers to tickle the captain's appetite, had used all the condiments within his reach; ventured on a sort of Regent's punch; and, as the consequence, had brought forth the dish so often eulogized, and so well beloved. It is a little extraordinary that in Paris, the seat of gastronomy, one rarely, if ever, hears of or sees this dish; while in London it is to be met in almost as great abundance as in one of our larger commercial towns. But so it is, and we cannot say we much envy its *cuisine à patés*, and *soufflets*, and its *à la* this and *à la* thats, but which was never redolent with the odors of turtle-soup.

"Upon my word, Jack, you have made out famously with your dinner, or supper, whichsoever you may please to call it," cried Mulford gayly, as he took his seat at the table, after having furnished Rose with a chair. "Nothing appears to be wanting; but here is good pilot bread, potatoes even, and other little niceties, in addition to the turtle and the fish. These good people of the light seem to have lived comfortably, at any rate."

"Why should they not, maty?" answered Jack, beginning to help to soup. "Living on one of these islets is like living afloat. Everything is laid in, as for an outward-bound craft; then the reef must always furnish fish and turtle. I've overhauled the lockers pretty thoroughly, and find a plenty of stores to last us a month. Tea, sugar, coffee, bread, pickles, potatoes, onions, and all other knick-knacks."

"The poor people who own these stores will be heavy-hearted enough when they come to learn the reason why we have been put in undisturbed possession of their property," said Rose. "We must contrive some means of repaying them for such articles as we may use, Harry."

"That's easily enough done, Miss Rose. Drop one of the half eagles in a teapot or a mug, and they'll be certain to fall in with it when they come back. Nothing is easier than to pay a body's debts, when a body has the will and the means. Now the worst enemy of Stephen Spike must own that his brig never quits port with unsettled bills. Stephen has his faults, like other mortals · but he has his good p'ints, too."

"Still praising Spike, my good Jack," cried the mate, a little provoked at this pertinacity in the deputy-steward, in sticking to his ship and his shipmate. "I should have thought that you had sailed with him long enough to have found him out, and to wish never to put your foot in his cabin again."

"Why, no, maty; a craft is a craft, and a body gets to like even the faults of one in which a body has gone through gales and squalls with a whole skin. I like the *Swash*, and, for sartain things, I like her captain."

"Meaning by that, it is your intention to get on board of the one and to sail with the other again as soon as you can."

"I do, Mr. Mulford, and make no bones in telling on't. You know that I came here without wishing it."

"Well, Jack, no one will attempt to control your movements, but you shall be left your own master. I feel it to be a duty, however, as one who may know more of the law than yourself, as well as more of Stephen Spike, to tell you that he is engaged in a treasonable commerce with the enemy, and that he, and all who voluntarily remain with him, knowing this fact, may be made to swing for it."

"Then I'll swing for it," returned Jack, sullenly.

"There is a little obstinacy in this, my good fellow, and you must be reasoned out of it. I am under infinite obligations to you, Jack, and shall ever be ready to own them. Without you to sail the boat, I might have been left to perish on that rock—for God only knows whether any vessel would have seen me in passing. Most of those who go through that passage keep the western side of the reef aboard, they tell me, on account of there being water on that side of the channel, and the chance of a man's being seen on a rock, by ships a league or two off, would be small indeed. Yes, Jack, I owe my life to you, and am proud to own it."

"You owe it to Miss Rose, maty, who put me up to the enterprise, and who shared it with me."

"To her I owe more than life," answered Harry, looking at his beloved as she delighted in being regarded by him; "but even she, with all her wishes to serve me, would have been helpless without your skill in managing a boat. I owe also to your good-nature the happiness of having Rose with me at this moment; for, without you she would not have come."

"I'll not deny it, maty—take another ladle-full of the soup, Miss Rosy; a quart of it wouldn't hurt an infant—I'll not deny it, Mr. Mulford—I know by the way you've got rid of the first bowlful that *you* are ready for another, and there it is—I'll not deny it, all I can say is that you are heartily welcome to my sarvices."

"I thank you, Jack; but all this only makes me more desirous of being of use to you, now when it is in my power. I wish you to stick by me, and not return to the *Swash*. As soon as I get to New York, I shall build or buy a ship, and the berth of steward in her shall always be open to you."

"Thank'ee, maty; thank'ee, with all my heart. It's something to know that a port is open to leeward, and, though I cannot *now* accept your offer, the day *may* come when I shall be glad to do so."

"If you like living ashore better, our house will always be ready to receive you. I shall be glad to leave as handy a little fellow as yourself behind me whenever I went to sea. There are a hundred things in which you might be useful and fully earn your biscuit, so as to have no qualms about eating the bread of idleness."

"Thank'ee, thank'ee, maty," cried Jack, dashing a tear out of his eye with the back of his hand, "thank'ee, sir, from the bottom of my heart. The time *may* come, but not now. My papers is signed for this v'y'ge. Stephen Spike has a halter round his neck, as you say your self, and it's necessary for me to be there to look to't. We all have our callin's and duties, and this is mine. I stick by the *Molly* and her captain until both are out of this scrape, or both are condemned. I know nothin' of treason; but if the law wants another victim, I must take my chance."

Mulford was surprised at this steadiness

of Jack's in what he thought a very bad cause, and he was quite as much surprised that Rose did not join him in his endeavors to persuade the steward not to be so foolhardy as to endeavor to go back to the brig. Rose did not, however, sitting silently eating her dinner the whole time, though she occasionally cast glances of interest at both the speakers the while. In this state of things the mate abandoned the attempt, for the moment, intending to return to the subject after having had a private conversation with his betrothed.

Notwithstanding the little drawback just related, that was a happy as well as a delicious repast. The mate did full justice to the soup, and afterward to the fish with the unpoetical name; and Rose ate more than she had done in the last three days. The habits of discipline prevented Jack from taking his seat at table, though pressed by both Rose and Harry to do so, but he helped himself to the contents of a bowl, and did full justice to his own art on one aside. The little fellow was delighted with the praises that were bestowed on his dishes; and for the moment, the sea, its dangers, its tornadoes, wrecks and races, were all forgotten in the security and pleasures of so savory a repast.

"Folks ashore don't know how sailors sometimes live," said Jack, holding a large spoon filled with the soup ready to plunge into a tolerably capacious mouth.

"Or how they sometimes starve," answered Rose. "Remember our own situation, less than forty-eight hours since!"

"All very true, Miss Rose; yet, you see, turtle-soup brings us up a'ter all. Would you like a glass of wine, maty?"

"Very much indeed, Jack, after so luscious a soup; but wishing for it will not bring it here."

"That remains to be seen, sir. I call this a bottle of something that looks very much like a wine."

"Claret, as I live! Why, where should lighthouse keepers get the taste for claret?"

"I've thought of that myself, Mr. Mulford, and have supposed that some of Uncle Sam's officers have brought the liquor to this part of the world. I understand a party on 'em was here surveyin' all last winter. It seems they come in the cool weather, and get their sights and measure their distances, and go home in the warm weather, and work out their traverses in the shade, as it might be."

"This seems likely, Jack; but, come whence it may, it is welcome, and we will taste it."

Mulford then drew the cork of this mild and grateful liquor, and helped his companions and himself. In this age of moral *tours de force*, one scarcely dare say anything favorable of a liquid that even bears the name of wine, or extol the shape of a bottle. It is truly the era of exaggeration. Nothing is treated in the old-fashioned, natural, common sense way. Virtue is no longer virtue, unless it get upon stilts; and, as for sin's being confined to "transgression against the law of God," audacious would be the wretch who should presume to limit the sway of the societies by any dogma so narrow! A man may be as abstemious as an anchorite, and get no credit for it, unless "he signs the pledge"; or, signing the pledge, he may get fuddled in corners, and be cited as a miracle of sobriety. The test of morals is no longer in the abuse of the gifts of Providence, but in their use; prayers are deserting the closets for the corners of streets, and charity (not the giving of alms) has got to be so earnest in the demonstration of its nature, as to be pretty certain to "begin at home," and to end where it begins. Even the art of mendacity has been aroused by the great progress which is making by all around it, and many manifest the strength of their ambition by telling ten lies where their fathers would have been satisfied with telling only one. This art has made an extraordinary progress within the last quarter of a century, aspiring to an ascendency that was formerly conceded only to truth, until he who gains his daily bread by it has some such contempt for the sneaking wretch who does business on

the small scale, as the slayer of his thousands in the field is known to entertain for him who kills only a single man in the course of a long life.

At the risk of damaging the reputations of our hero and heroine, we shall frankly aver the fact that both Harry and Rose partook of the *vin de Bordeaux*, a very respectable bottle of *Medoc*, by the way, which had been forgotten by Uncle Sam's people, in the course of the preceding winter, agreeably to Jack Tier's conjecture. One glass sufficed for Rose, and, contrary as it may be to all modern theory, she was somewhat the better for it; while the mate and Jack Tier quite half emptied the bottle, being none the worse. There they sat, enjoying the security and abundance which had succeeded to their late danger, happy in that security, happy in themselves, and happy in the prospects of a bright future. It was just as practicable for them to remain at the Dry Tortugas as it was for the family which ordinarily dwelt at the light. The place was amply supplied with everything that would be necessary for their wants, for months to come, and Harry caused his betrothed to blush, as he whispered to her, should the chaplain arrive, he should delight in passing the honeymoon where they then were.

"I could tend the light," he added, smiling, "which would be not only an occupation, but a useful occupation; you could read all those books from beginning to end, and Jack could keep us supplied with fish. By the way, master steward, are you in the humor for motion, so soon after your hearty meal?"

"Anything to be useful," answered Jack, cheerfully.

"Then do me the favor to go up into the lantern of the lighthouse, and take a look for the sloop-of-war. If she's in sight at all, you'll find her off here to the northward; and while you are aloft you may as well make a sweep of the whole horizon. There hangs the lighthouse-keeper's glass, which may help your eyes, by stepping into the gallery outside of the lantern."

Jack willingly complied, taking the glass and proceeding forthwith to the other building. Mulford had two objects in view in giving this commission to the steward. He really wished to ascertain what was the chance of seeing the *Poughkeepsie* in the neighborhood of the islets, and felt just that indisposition to move himself that is apt to come over one who has recently made a very bountiful meal, while he also desired to have another private conversation with Rose.

A good portion of the time that Jack was gone, and he stayed quite an hour in the lantern, our lovers conversed as lovers are much inclined to converse; that is to say, of themselves, their feelings, and their prospects. Mulford told Rose of his hopes and fears, while he visited at the house of her aunt, previously to sailing, and the manner in which his suspicions had been first awakened in reference to the intentions of Spike—intentions, so far as they were connected with an admiration of his old commander's niece, and possibly in connection also with the little fortune she was known to possess, but not in reference to the bold project to which he had, in fact, resorted. No distrust of the scheme finally put in practice had ever crossed the mind of the young mate, until he received the unexpected order, mentioned in our opening chapter, to prepare the brig for the reception of Mrs. Budd and her party. Harry confessed his jealousy of one youth whom he dreaded far more even than he had ever dreaded Spike, and whose apparent favor with Rose, and actual favor with her aunt, had given him many a sleepless night.

They next conversed of the future, which to them seemed full of flowers. Various were the projects started, discussed, and dismissed between them—the last almost as soon as proposed. On one thing they were of a mind as soon as proposed. Harry was to have a ship as quick as one could be purchased by Rose's means, and the promised bride laughingly consented to make one voyage to Europe along with her husband.

"I wonder, dear Rose, my poverty has never presented any difficulties in the way of our union," said Harry, sensibly touched

with the free way his betrothed disposed of her own money in his behalf; "but neither you nor Mrs. Budd has ever seemed to think of the difference there is between us in this respect."

"What is the trifle I possess, Harry, set in the balance against your worth? My aunt, as you say, has thought I might even be the gainer by the exchange."

"I am sure I feel a thousand times indebted to Mrs. Budd—"

"*Aunt* Budd. You must learn to say, '*my* Aunt Budd,' Mr. Henry Mulford, if you mean to live in peace with her unworthy niece."

"*Aunt* Budd, then," returned Harry, laughing, for the laugh came easily that evening; "Aunt Budd, if you wish it, Rose. I can have no objection to call any relative of yours uncle or aunt."

"I think we are intimate enough, now, to ask you a question or two, Harry, touching my aunt," continued Rose, looking stealthily over her shoulder, as if apprehensive of being overheard. "You know how fond she is of speaking of the sea and of indulging in nautical phrases?"

"Any one must have observed that, Rose," answered the young man, gazing up at the wall, in order not to be compelled to look the beautiful creature before him in the eyes—"Mrs. Budd has very strong tastes that way."

"Now tell me, Harry—that is, answer me frankly—I mean—she is not *always* right, is she?"

"Why, no; not absolutely so—that is not absolutely *always* so—few persons are *always* right, you know."

Rose remained silent and embarrassed for a moment, after which she pursued the discourse.

"But aunty does not know as much of the sea and of ships as she thinks she does!"

"Perhaps not. We all overrate our own acquirements. I dare say that even I am not as good a seaman as I fancy myself to be."

"Even Spike admits that you are what he calls a 'prime seaman.' But it is not easy for a woman to get a correct knowledge of the use of all the strange, and sometimes uncouth, terms that you sailors use."

"Certainly not, and for that reason I would rather you should never attempt it, Rose. We rough sons of the ocean would prefer to hear our wives make divers pretty blunders, rather than to be swaggering about like so many 'old salts.'"

"Mr. Mulford! Does Aunt Budd swagger like an old salt?"

"Dearest Rose, I was not thinking of your aunt, but of *you*. Of you, as you are, feminine, spirited, lovely alike in form and character, and of you a graduate of the ocean, and full of its language and ideas."

It was probable that Rose was not displeased at this allusion to herself, for a smile struggled around her pretty mouth, and she did not look at all angry. After another short pause, she resumed the discourse.

"My aunt did not very clearly comprehend those explanations of yours about the time of day, and the longitude," she said, "nor am I quite certain that I did myself."

"You understand them far better than Mrs. Budd, Rose. Women are so little accustomed to *think* on such subjects at all that it is not surprising they sometimes get confused. I do wish, however, that your aunt could be persuaded to be more cautious in the presence of strangers on the subject of terms she does not understand."

"I feared it might be so, Harry," answered Rose, in a low voice, as if unwilling even he should know the full extent of her thoughts on this subject; "but my aunt's heart is most excellent, though she may make mistakes occasionally. I owe her a great deal, if not absolutely my education, certainly my health and comfort through childhood, and more prudent, womanly advice than you may suppose, perhaps, since I have left school. How she became the dupe of Spike, indeed, is to me unaccountable for in all that relates to health she is, in general, both acute and skillful."

"Spike is a man of more art than he appears to be to superficial observers.

On my first acquaintance with him, I mistook him for a frank, fearless, but well-meaning sailor, who loved hazardous voyages and desperate speculation—a sort of innocent gambler; but I have learned to know better. His means are pretty much reduced to his brig, and she is getting old, and can do but little more service. His projects are plain enough now. By getting you into his power, he hoped to compel a marriage, in which case both your fortune and your aunt's would contribute to repair his."

"He might have killed me, but I never would have married him," rejoined Rose, firmly. "Is not that Jack coming down the steps of the lighthouse?"

"It is. I find that fellow's attachment to Spike very extraordinary, Rose. Can you, in any manner, account for it?"

Rose at first seemed disposed to reply. Her lips parted, as if about to speak, and closed again, as glancing her eyes toward the open door, she seemed to expect the appearance of the steward's little rotund form on its threshold, which held her tongue tied. A brief interval elapsed, however, ere Jack actually arrived, and Rose, perceiving that Harry was curiously expecting her answer, she said hurriedly—"It may be hatred, not attachment."

The next instant Jack Tier entered the room. He had been gone rather more than hour, not returning until just as the sun was about to set in a flame of fire.

"Well, Jack, what news from the *Poughkeepsie?*" demanded the mate. "You have been gone long enough to make sure of your errand. It is certain that we are not to see the man-of-war's men to-night."

"Whatever you see, my advice to you is to keep close, and to be on your guard," answered Jack evasively.

"I have little fear of any of Uncle Sam's craft. A plain story and an honest heart will make all clear to a well-disposed listener. We have not been accomplices in Spike's treasons, and cannot be made to answer for them."

"Take my advice, maty, and be in no hurry to hail every vessel you see. Uncle Sam's fellows may not always be at hand to help you. Do not you know that this island will be tabooed to seamen for some time to come?"

"Why so, Jack? The islet has done no harm, though others may have performed wicked deeds near it."

"Two of the drowned men lie within a hundred yards of this spot, and sailors never go near new-made graves, if they can find any other place to resort to."

"You deal in enigmas, Jack; and did I not know that you are very temperate, I might suspect that the time you have been gone has been passed in the company of a bottle of brandy."

"That will explain my meanin'," said Jack laconically, pointing as he spoke seemingly at some object that was to be seen without.

The door of the house was wide open, for the admission of air. It faced the haven of the islets, and just as the mate's eyes were turned to it the end of a flying-jib-boom, with the sail down, and fluttering beneath it, was coming into the view. "*The Poughkeepsie!*" exclaimed Mulford in delight, seeing all his hopes realized, while Rose blushed to the eyes. A pause succeeded, during which Mulford drew aside, keeping his betrothed in the background, and as much out of sight as possible. The vessel was shooting swiftly into view, and presently all there could see it was the *Swash*.

CHAPTER XII.

"But no—he surely is not dreaming.
Another minute makes it clear,
A scream, a rush, a burning tear,
From Inez's cheek, dispel the fear
That bliss like his is only seeming."
—WASHINGTON ALLSTON.

A MOMENT of appalled surprise succeeded the instant when Harry and Rose first ascertained the real character of the vessel that had entered the haven of the Dry Tortugas. Then the first turned toward Jack Tier, and sternly demanded an explanation of his apparent faithlessness.

"Rascal," he cried, "has this treachery

been intended? Did you not see the brig and know her?"

"Hush, Harry, *dear* Harry," exclaimed Rose, entreatingly. "My life for it, Jack has *not* been faithless."

"Why, then, has he not let us know that the brig was coming? For more than an hour has he been aloft, on the lookout, and here are we taken quite by surprise. Rely on it, Rose, he has seen the approach of the brig, and might have sooner put us on our guard."

"Ay, ay, lay it on, maty," said Jack, coolly, neither angry nor mortified, so far as appearances went, at these expressions of dissatisfaction; "my back is used to it. If I didn't know what it is to get hard raps on the knuckles, I should be but a young steward. But, as for this business, a little reflection will tell you I am not to blame."

"Give us your own explanations, for without them I shall trust you no longer."

"Well, sir, what good would it have done, *had* I told you the brig was standing for this place? There she came down, like a race-horse, and escape for you was impossible. As the wind is now blowin', the *Molly* would go two feet to the boat's one, and a chase would have been madness."

"I don't know that, sirrah," answered the mate. "The boat might have got into the smaller passages of the reef, where the brig could not enter, or she might have dodged about among these islets until it was night, and then escaped in the darkness."

"I thought of all that, Mr. Mulford, but it came too late. When I first went aloft I came out on the northwest side of the lantern, and took my seat, to look out for the sloop-of-war, as you bade me, sir. Well, there I was, sweepin' the horizon with the glass for the better part of an hour, sometimes fancyin' I saw her, and then givin' it up; for to this moment I am not sartain there isn't a sail off here to the westward, turning up toward the light on a bowline; but if there be, she's too far off to know anything partic'lar about her. Well, sir, there I sat, looking for the *Poughkeepsie*, for the better part of an hour, when I thought I would go round on t'other side of the lantern and take a look to windward. My heart was in my mouth, I can tell you, Miss Rose, when I saw the brig; and I felt both glad and sorry. Glad on my own account, and sorry on your'n. There she was, however, and no help for it, within two miles of this very spot, and coming down as if she despised touching the water at all. Now what could I do? There wasn't time, Mr. Mulford, to get the boat out and the mast stepped, afore we should have been within reach of canister, and Stephen Spike would not have spared *that*, in order to get you again within his power."

"Depend on it, Harry, this is all true," said Rose, earnestly. "I know Jack well, and can answer for his fidelity. He wishes to, and if he can he *will* return to the brig, whither he thinks his duty calls him, but he will never willingly betray *us*—least of all, *me*. Do I speak as I ought, Jack?"

"Gospel truth, Miss Rose, and Mr. Mulford will get over this squall, as soon as he comes to think of matters as he ought. There's my hand, maty, to show I bear no malice."

"I take it, Jack, for I must believe you honest, after all you have done for us. Excuse my warmth, which, if a little unreasonable, was somewhat natural under the circumstances. I suppose our case is now hopeless, and that we shall all be soon on board the brig again; for Spike will hardly think of abandoning me again on an island provisioned and fitted as is this!"

"It's not so sartain, sir, that you fall into his hands at all," put in Jack. "The men of the brig will never come here of their own accord, depend on that, for sailors don't like graves. Spike has come in here a'ter the schooner's chain, that he dropped into the water when he made sail from the sloop-of-war, at the time he was here afore, and is not expectin' to find us here. No—no—he thinks we are beatin' up toward Key West this very minute, if, indeed, he has missed us at all. 'Tis possible he believes the boat has got adrift by

accident, and has no thought of our bein' out of the brig."

"That is impossible, Jack. Do you suppose he is ignorant that Rose is missing?"

"Sartain of it, maty, if Mrs. Budd has read the letter well that Miss Rose left for her, and Biddy has obeyed orders. If they've followed instructions, Miss Rose is thought to be in her stateroom, mournin' for a young man who was abandoned on a naked rock; and Jack Tier, havin' eat somethin' that has disagreed with him, is in his berth. Recollect, Spike will not be apt to look into Miss Rose's stateroom or my berth, to see if all this is true. The cook and Josh are both in my secret, and know I mean to come back, and when the fit is over I have only to return to duty, like any other hand. It is my calculation that Spike believes both Miss Rose and myself on board the *Molly* at this very moment."

"And the boat—what can he suppose has become of the boat?"

"Sartainly, the boat makes the only chance ag'in us. But the boat was ridin' by its painter astarn, and accidents sometimes happen to such craft. Then we two are the wery last he will suspect of havin' made off in the boat by ourselves. There'll be Mrs. Budd and Biddy as a sort of pledge that Miss Rose is aboard, and as for Jack Tier, he is too insignificant to occupy the captain's thoughts just now. He will probably muster the people for'ard, when he finds the boat is gone, but I do not think he'll trouble the cabins or staterooms."

Mulford admitted that this was *possible*, though it scarcely seemed probable to him. There was no help, however, for the actual state of things, and they all now turned their attention to the brig, and to the movements of those on board her. Jack Tier had swung to the outer door of the house as soon as the *Swash* came in view through it, and fortunately none of the windows on that side of the building had been opened at all. The air entered to windward which was on the rear of the dwelling, so that it was possible for it to be comfortable, and yet leave the front, in view from the vessel, with its deserted air. As for the brig, she had already anchored and got both her boats into the water. The yawl was hauled alongside, in readiness for any service that might be required of it, while the launch had been manned at once and was already weighing the anchor, and securing the chain to which Tier had alluded. All this served very much to lessen the uneasiness of Mulford and Rose, as it went far to prove that Spike had not come to the Dry Tortugas in quest of them, as, at first, both had very naturally supposed. It might, indeed, turn out that his sole object was to obtain this anchor and chain, with a view to use them in raising the ill-fated vessel that had now twice gone to the bottom.

"I wish an explanation with you, Jack, on one other point," said the mate, after all three had been for some time observing the movements on board and around the *Swash*. "Do you actually intend to get on board the brig?"

"If it's to be done, maty. My v'y'ge is up with you and Miss Rose. I may be said to have shipped for Key West and a market, and the market's found at this port."

"You will hardly leave us *yet*, Jack," said Rose, with a manner and emphasis that did not fail to strike her betrothed lover, though he could in no way account for either. That Rose should not wish to be left alone with him in that solitary place, was natural enough; or, might rather be referred to education and the peculiar notions of her sex; but he could not understand why so much importance should be attached to the presence of a being of Jack Tier's mold and character. It was true, that there was little choice, under present circumstances, but it occurred to Mulford that Rose had manifested the same strange predilection when there might have been something nearer to a selection. The moment, however, was not one for much reflection on the subject.

"You will hardly leave us, yet, Jack?" said Rose, in the manner related.

"It's now or never, Miss Rose. If the brig once gets away from this anchorage without me, I may never lay eyes on her

ag'in. Her time is nearly up, for wood and iron won't hold together always, any more than flesh and blood. Consider how many years I've been busy in huntin' her up, and how hard 'twill be to lose that which has given me so many weary days and sleepless nights to find."

Rose said no more. If not convinced, she was evidently silenced, while Harry was left to wonder and surmise, as best he might. Both quitted the subject, to watch the people of the brig. By this time the anchor had been lifted, and the chain was heaving in on board the vessel, by means of a line that had been got around its bight. The work went on rapidly, and Mulford observed to Rose that he did not think it was the intention of Spike to remain long at the Tortugas, inasmuch as his brig was riding by a very short range of cable. This opinion was confirmed, half an hour later, when it was seen that the launch was hooked on and hoisted in again, as soon as the chain and anchor of the schooner were secured.

Jack Tier watched every movement with palpable uneasiness. His apprehensions that Spike would obtain all he wanted and be off before he could rejoin him, increased at each instant, and he did not scruple to announce an intention to take the boat and go alongside of the *Swash* at every hazard, rather than be left.

"You do not reflect on what you say, Jack," answered Harry; "unless, indeed, it be your intention to betray us. How could you appear in the boat, at this place, without letting it be known that we must be hard by?"

"That don't follow at all, maty," answered Jack. "Suppose I go alongside the brig and own to the captain that I took the boat last night with the hope of findin' you, and that failin' to succeed, I bore up for this port, to look for provisions and water. Miss Rose he thinks on board this moment, and in my judgment he would take me at my word, give me a good cursing, and think no more about it."

"It would never do, Jack," interposed Rose, instantly. "It would cause the destruction of Harry, as Spike would not believe you had not found him, without an examination of this house."

"What are they about with the yawl, Mr. Mulford?" asked Jack, whose eye was never off the vessel for a single moment. "It's gettin' to be so dark that one can hardly see the boat, but it seems as if they're about to man the yawl."

"They are, and there goes a lantern into it. And that is Spike himself coming down the brig's side this instant."

"They can only bring a lantern to search this house," exclaimed Rose. "Oh! Harry, you are lost!"

"I rather think the lantern is for the lighthouse," answered Mulford, whose coolness, at what was certainly a most trying moment, did not desert him. "Spike may wish to keep the light burning, for, once before, you will remember, he had it kindled after the keeper was removed. As for his sailing, he would not be apt to sail until the moon rises; and in beating back to the wreck, the light may serve to let him know the bearings and position of the reef."

"There they come," whispered Rose, half breathless with alarm. "The boat has left the brig, and is coming directly hither!"

All this was true enough. The yawl had shoved off, and with two men to row it, was pulling for the wharf in front of the house, and among the timbers of which lay the boat, pretty well concealed beneath a sort of bridge. Mulford would not retreat, though he looked to the fastenings of the door as a means of increasing his chances of defense. In the stern sheets of the boat sat two men, though it was not easy to ascertain who they were by the fading light. One was known to be Spike, however, and the other, it was conjectured, must be Don Juan Montefalderon, from the circumstance of his being in the place of honor. Three minutes solved this question, the boat reaching the wharf by that time. It was instantly secured, and all four of the men left it. Spike was now plainly to be discerned by means of the lantern which he carried in his own hands. He gave some orders, in his customary

authoritative way, and in a high key, after which he led the way from the wharf. walking side by side with the Señor Montefalderon. These two last came within a yard of the door of the house, where they paused, enabling those within not only to see their persons and the working of their countenances, but to hear all that was said; this last the more especially, since Spike never thought it necessary to keep his powerful voice within moderate limits.

"It's hardly worth while, Don Wan, for you to go into the lighthouse," said Spike. "'Tis but a greasy dirty place at the best, and one's clothes are never the better for dealin' with ile. Here, Bill, take the lantern, and get a filled can, that we may go up and trim and fill the lamp, and make a blaze. Bear a hand, lads, and I'll be a'ter ye afore you reach the lantern. Be careful with the flame about the ile, for seamen ought never to wish to see a lighthouse destroyed."

"What do you expect to gain by lighting the lamps above, Don Esteban?" demanded the Mexican, when the sailors had disappeared in the lighthouse, taking their own lantern with them.

"It's wisest to keep things reg'lar about this spot, Don Wan, which will prevent unnecessary suspicions. But, as the brig stretches in toward the reef to-night, on our way back, the light will be a great assistance. I am short of officers, you know, and want all the help of this sort I can get."

"To be sincere with you, Don Esteban, I greatly regret you *are* so short of officers, and do not yet despair of inducing you to go and take off the mate, whom I hear you have left on a barren rock. He was a fine young fellow, Señor Spike, and the deed was not one that you will wish to remember a few years hence."

"The fellow run, and I took him at his word, Don Wan. I'm not obliged to receive back a deserter unless it suits me."

"We are all obliged to see we do not cause a fellow-creature the loss of life. This will prove the death of the charming young woman who is so much attached to him, unless you relent and are merciful!"

"Women have tender looks, but tough hearts," answered Spike, carelessly, though Mulford felt certain, by the tone of his voice, that great bitterness of feeling lay smothered beneath the affected indifference of his manner· "few die of love."

"The young lady has not been on deck all day, and the Irish woman tells me that she does nothing but drink water—the certain proof of a high fever."

"Ay, ay, she keeps her room if you will, Don Wan, but she is not about to make a dupe of me by any such tricks. I must go and look to the lamps, however, and you will find the graves you seek in the rear of this house, about thirty yards behind it, you'll remember. That's a very pretty cross you've made, señor, and the skipper of the schooner's soul will be all the better for settin' it up at the head of his grave."

"It will serve to let those who come after us know that a Christian sleeps beneath the sand, Don Esteban," answered the Mexican, mildly. "I have no other expectation from this sacred symbol."

The two now separated, Spike going into the lighthouse, little in a hurry, while Don Juan Montefalderon walked round the building to its rear, in quest of the grave. Mulford waited a moment for Spike to get a short distance up the stairs of the high tower he had to ascend, when placing the arm of Rose within his own, he opened the door in the rear of the house and walked boldly toward the Mexican. Don Juan was actually forcing the pointed end of his little cross into the sand, at the head of his countryman's grave, when Mulford and his trembling companion reached the spot. Although night had shut in, it was not so dark that persons could not be recognized at small distances. The Señor Montefalderon was startled at an apparition so sudden and unexpected, when Mulford saluted him by name; but recognizing first the voice of Harry, and then the persons of himself and his companion, surprise, rather than alarm, became the emotion that was up-

permost. Notwithstanding the strength of the first of these feelings, he instantly saluted the young couple with the polished ease that marked his manner, which had much of the courtesy of a Castilian in it, tempered a little, perhaps, by the greater flexibility of a Southern American.

"I *see*," exclaimed Don Juan, "and must believe my eyes. Without their evidence, however, I could scarce believe it can be you two, one of whom I thought was on board the brig, and the other suffering a most miserable death on a naked rock."

"I am aware of your kind feelings in our behalf, Don Juan," said Mulford, "and it is the reason I now confide in you. I was taken off that rock by means of the boat which you doubtless have missed; and this is the gentle being who has been the means of saving my life. To her and Jack Tier, who is yonder, under the shadows of the house, I owe my not being the victim of Spike's cruelty."

"I now comprehend the whole matter, Don Henriquez. Jack Tier has managed the boat for the señorita; and those whom we were told were too ill to be seen on deck have been really out of the brig!"

"Such are the facts, señor, and from *you* there is no wish to conceal them. We are then to understand that the absence of Rose and Jack from the brig is not known to Spike?"

"I believe not, señor. He has alluded to both, once or twice to-day, as being ill below; but would you not do well to retire within the shade of the dwelling, lest a glance from the lantern might let those in it know that I am not alone?"

"There is little danger, Don Juan, as they who stand near a light cannot well see those who are in the darkness. Besides, they are high in the air while we are on the ground, which will greatly add to the obscurity down here. We can retire, nevertheless, as I have a few questions to ask, which may as well be put in perfect security, as put where there is any risk."

The three now drew near the house, Rose actually stepping within its door, though Harry remained on its exterior, in order to watch the proceedings of those in the lighthouse. Here the Señor Montefalderon entered into a more detailed explanation of what had occurred on board the brig, since the appearance of day, that very morning. According to his account of the matter, Spike had immediately called upon the people to explain the loss of the boat. Tier was not interrogated on this occasion, it being understood he had gone below and turned in, after having the lookout for fully half the night. As no one could or would give an account of the manner in which the boat was missing, Josh was ordered to go below and question Jack on the subject. Whether it was from consciousness of his connection with the escape of Jack, and apprehensions of the consequences, or from innate good-nature and a desire to befriend the lovers, this black now admitted that Jack confessed to him that the boat had got away from him while endeavoring to shift the turns of its painter from a cleat where they ought not to be, to their proper place. This occurred early in Jack's watch, according to Josh's story, and had not been reported, as the boat did not properly belong to the brig, and was an encumbrance rather than an advantage. The mate admired the negro's cunning, as Don Juan related this part of the story, which put him in a situation to throw all the blame on Jack's mendacity in the event of a discovery, while it had the effect to allow the fugitives more time for their escape. The result was, that Spike bestowed a few hearty curses, as usual, on the clumsiness of Jack Tier, and seemed to forget all about the matter. It is probable he connected Jack's abstaining from showing himself on deck, and his alleged indisposition with his supposed delinquency in this matter of the boat. From that moment the captain appeared to give himself no further concern on the subject, the boat having been, in truth, an encumbrance rather than a benefit, as stated.

As for Rose, her keeping her room, under the circumstances, was so very natural, that the Señor Montefalderon had been completely deceived, as, from his

tranquillity on this point, there was no question was the case with Spike also. Biddy appeared on deck, though the widow did not, and the Irishwoman shook her head anxiously when questioned about her young mistress, giving the spectators reason to suppose that the latter was in a very bad way.

As respects the brig and her movements, Spike had got under way as soon as there was light enough to find his course, and had run through the passage. It is probable that the boat was seen; for something that was taken for a small sail had just been made out for a single instant, and then became lost again. This little sail was made, if made at all, in the direction of the Dry Tortugas, but so completely was all suspicion at rest in the minds of those on the quarter-deck of the *Swash*, that neither Spike nor the Mexican had the least idea of what it was. When the circumstance was reported to the former, he answered that it was probably some small wrecker, of which many were hovering about the reef, and added, laughingly, though in a way to prove how little he thought seriously on the subject at all, "who knows but the lighthouse boat has fallen into their hands, and that they've made sail on *her;* if they have, my word for it, that she goes, hull, spars, rigging, canvas, and cargo, all in a lump, for salvage."

As the brig came out of the passage, in broad day, the heads of the schooner's masts were seen, as a matter of course. This induced Spike to heave-to, lower a boat, and to go in person to examine the condition of the wreck. It will be seen that Jack's presence could now be all the better dispensed with. The examination, with the soundings, and other calculations connected with raising the vessel, occupied hours. When they were completed, Spike returned on board, ran up his boat, and squared away for the Dry Tortugas. Señor Montefalderon confirmed the justice of Jack Tier's surmises as to the object of this unexpected visit. The brig had come solely for the chain and anchor mentioned, and having secured them, it was Spike's intention to get under way and beat up to the wreck again as soon as the moon rose. As for the sloop-of-war, he believed she had given him up; for by this time she must know that she had no chance with the brig, so long as the latter kept near the reef, and that she ran the constant hazard of shipwreck, while playing so near the dangers herself.

Before the Señor Montefalderon exhausted all he had to communicate he was interrupted by Jack Tier with a singular proposition. Jack's great desire was to get on board the *Swash;* and he now begged the Mexican to let Mulford take the yawl and scull him off to the brig, and return to the islet before Spike and his companions should descend from the lantern of the lighthouse. The little fellow insisted there was sufficient time for such a purpose, as the three in the lantern had not yet succeeded in filling the lamps with the oil necessary to their burning for a night—a duty that usually occupied the regular keeper for an hour. Five or six minutes would suffice for him; and if he were seen going up the brig's side, it would be easy for him to maintain that he had come ashore in the boat. No one took such precise note of what was going on as to be able to contradict him; and as to Spike and the men with him, they would probably never hear anything about it.

Don Juan Montefalderon was struck with the boldness of Jack Tier's plan, but refused his assent to it. He deemed it too hazardous, but substituted a project of his own. The moon would not rise until near eleven, and it wanted several hours before the time of sailing. When they returned to the brig, he would procure his cloak, and scull himself ashore, being perfectly used to managing a boat in this way, under the pretense of wishing to pass an hour longer near the grave of his countryman. At the expiration of that hour he would take Jack off, concealed beneath his cloak—an exploit of no great difficulty in the darkness, especially as no one would be on deck but a hand or two keeping the anchor-watch. With this

arrangement, therefore, Jack Tier was obliged to be content.

Some fifteen or twenty minutes more passed, during which the Mexican again alluded to his country, and his regrets at her deplorable situation. The battles of the 8th and 9th of May, two combats that ought to and which will reflect high honor on the little army that won them, as well as on that hardly worked, and in some respects hardly used, service to which they belong, had been just fought. Don Juan mentioned these events without reserve, and frankly admitted that success had fallen to the portion of much the weaker party. He ascribed the victory to the great superiority of the American officers of inferior rank; it being well known that in the service of the "Republic of the North," as he termed America, men who had been regularly educated at the military academy, and who had reached the period of middle life, were serving in the stations of captains, and sometimes in that of lieutenants; men who, in many cases, were fitted to command regiments and brigades having been kept in these lower stations by the tardiness with which promotion comes in an army like that of this country.

Don Juan Montefalderon was not sufficiently conversant with the subject perhaps, else he might have added, that when occasions *do* offer to bestow on these gentlemen the preferment they have so hardly and patiently earned, they are too often neglected, in order to extend the circle of vulgar political patronage. He did not know that, when a new regiment of dragoons was raised, one permanent in its character, and intended to be identified with the army in all future time, instead of giving its commissions to those who had fairly earned them by long privations and faithful service, they were given, with one or two exceptions, to strangers.

No government trifles more with its army and navy than our own. So niggardly are the master spirits at Washington of the honors justly earned by military men, that we have fleets still commanded by captains, and armies by officers whose regular duty it would be to command brigades. The world is edified with the sight of forces sufficient in numbers, and every other military requisite, to make one of Napoleon's *corps d'armée*, led by one whose commission would place him properly at the head of a brigade, and nobly led, too. Here, when so favorable an occasion offers to add a regiment or two to the old permanent line of the army, and thus infuse new life into its hopes deferred, the opportunity is overlooked, and the rank and file are to be obtained by cramming, instead of by a generous regard to the interests of the gallant gentlemen who have done so much for the honor of the American name, and, unhappily, so little for themselves. The extra patriots of the nation, and they form a legion large enough to trample the "Halls of the Montezumas" under their feet, tell us that the reward of those other patriots beneath the shadows of the Sierre Madre is to be in the love and approbation of their fellow-citizens, at the very moment when they are giving the palpable proof of the value of this esteem, and of the inconsistency of popular applause, by pointing their fingers, on account of an inadvertent expression in a letter, at the gallant soldier who taught, in our own times, the troops of this country to stand up to the best appointed regiments of England, and to carry off victory from the pride of Europe, in fair field-fights. Alas! alas! it is true of nations as well as of men, in their simplest and earliest forms of association, that there are "secrets in all families"; and it will no more do to dwell on our own than it would edify us to expose those of poor Mexico.

The discourse between the Señor Montefalderon and Mulford was interesting, as it ever has been when the former spoke of his unfortunate country. On the subject of the battles of May, he was candid, and admitted his deep mortification and regrets. He had expected more from the force collected on the Rio Grande, though, understanding the northern character better than most of his countrymen, he had not been as much taken by surprise as the great bulk of his own nation.

"Nevertheless, Don Henrique," he concluded, for the voice of Spike was just then heard as he was descending the stairs of the lighthouse, "nevertheless, Don Henrique, there is one thing that your people, brave, energetic, and powerful as I acknowledge them to be, would do well to remember, and it is this: no nation of the numbers of ours can be, or ever was, conquered, unless by the force of political combinations. In a certain state of society a government may be overturned, or a capital taken, and carry a whole country along with it, but our condition is one not likely to bring about such a result. We are of a race different from the Anglo-Saxon, and it will not be easy either to assimilate us to your own, or wholly to subdue us. In those parts of the country where the population is small, in time, no doubt, the Spanish race might be absorbed and your sway established; but ages of war would be necessary entirely to obliterate our usages, our language and our religion from the peopled portions of Mexico."

It might be well for some among us to reflect on these matters; the opinions of Don Juan, in our judgment, being entitled to the consideration of all prudent and considerate men.

As Spike descended to the door of the lighthouse, Harry, Rose, and Jack Tier retired within that of the dwelling. Presently the voice of the captain was heard hailing the Mexican, and together they walked to the wharf, the former boasting to the latter of his success in making a brilliant light. Brilliant it was, indeed; so brilliant as to give Mulford many misgivings on the subject of the boat. The light from the lantern fell upon the wharf, and he could see the boat from the window where he stood, with Spike standing nearly over it, waiting for the men to get his own yawl ready. It is true, the captain's back was toward the dangerous object, and the planks of the bridge were partly between him and it; but there was a serious danger that was solely averted by the circumstance that Spike was so earnestly dilating on some subject to Don Juan, as to look only at that gentleman's face. A minute later they were all in the yawl, which pulled rapidly toward the brig.

Don Juan Montefalderon was not long absent. Ten minutes sufficed for the boat to reach the *Swash*, for him to obtain his cloak, and to return to the islet alone, no one in the vessel feeling a desire to interfere with his imaginary prayers. As for the people, it was not probable that one in the brig could have been induced to accompany him to the graves at that hour; though everybody but Josh had turned in, as he informed Mulford, to catch short naps previously to the hour of getting the brig under way. As for the steward, he had been placed on the lookout as the greatest idler on board. All this was exceeding favorable to Jack Tier's project, since Josh was already in the secret of his absence, and would not be likely to betray his return. After a brief consultation, it was agreed to wait half an hour, in order to let the sleepers lose all consciousness, when Don Juan proposed returning to the vessel with his new companion.

The thirty or forty minutes that succeeded were passed in general conversation. On this occasion the Señor Montefalderon spoke more freely than he had yet done of recent events. He let it be plainly seen how much he despised Spike, and how irksome to him was the intercourse he was obliged to maintain, and to which he only submitted through a sense of duty. The money known to be in the schooner was a larger amount than had been supposed; and every dollar was so important to Mexico, at that moment, that he did not like to abandon it, else, did he declare, that he would quit the brig at once, and share in the fortunes of Harry and Rose. He courteously expressed his best wishes for the happiness of the young couple, and delicately intimated that, under the circumstances, he supposed that they would be united as soon as they could reach a place where the marriage rite could be celebrated. This was said in the most judicious way possible; so delicately as not to wound any one's feelings, and in a way to cause it to resemble the announcement of an expectation, rather than the piece of paternal advice for which it was

really intended. Harry was delighted with this suggestion of his Mexican friend —the most loyal American may still have a sincere friend of Mexican birth and Mexican feelings, too—since it favored not only his secret wishes, but his secret expectations also.

At the appointed moment Don Juan Montefalderon and Jack Tier took their leave of the two they left behind them. Rose manifested what to Harry seemed a strange reluctance to part with the little steward; but Tier was bent on profiting by this excellent opportunity to get back to the brig. They went, accordingly, and the anxious listeners, who watched the slightest movement of the yawl from the shore, had reason to believe that Jack was smuggled in without detection. They heard the familiar sound of the oar falling in the boat, and Mulford said that Josh's voice might be distinguished answering to a call from Don Juan. No noise or clamor was heard, such as Spike would certainly have made had he detected the deception that had been practiced on himself.

Harry and Rose were now alone. The former suggested that the latter should take possession of one of the little bedrooms that are usually to be found in American dwellings of the dimensions and humble character of the lighthouse abode, while he kept watch until the brig should sail. Until Spike was fairly off he would not trust himself to sleep; but there was no sufficient reason why Rose should not endeavor to repair the evil of a broken night's rest, like that which had been passed in the boat. With this understanding, then, our heroine took possession of her little apartment, where she threw herself on the bed in her clothes, while Mulford walked out into the air, as the most effective means of helping to keep his eyes open.

It was now some time past ten, and before eleven the moon would rise. The mate consequently knew that his watch could not be long before Spike would quit the neighborhood—a circumstance pregnant with immense relief to him, at least. So long as that unscrupulous, and now nearly desperate man, remained anywhere near Rose, he felt that she could not be safe; and as he paced the sands on the off or outer side of the islet, in order to be beyond the influence of the light in the lantern, his eye was scarcely a moment taken away from the *Swash*, so impatiently and anxiously did he wait for the signs of some movements on board her.

The moon rose, and Mulford heard the well-known raps on the booby-hatch, which precedes the call of "all hands," on board a merchantman. "All hands up anchor, ahoy!" succeeded, and in less than five minutes the bustle on board the brig announced the fact, that her people were "getting the anchor." By this time it had got to be so light that the mate deemed it prudent to return to the house, in order that he might conceal his person within its shadows. Awake Rose he would not, though he knew she would witness the departure of the *Swash* with a satisfaction little short of his own. He thought he would wait, that when he did speak to her at all, it might be to announce their entire safety. As regarded the aunt, Rose was much relieved on her account, by the knowledge that Jack Tier would not fail to let Mrs. Budd know everything connected with her own situation and prospects. The desertion of Jack, after coming so far with her, had pained our heroine in a way we cannot at present explain; but go he would, probably feeling assured there was no longer any necessity for his continuance with the lovers, in order to prevail on Rose to escape from Spike.

The *Swash* was not long in getting her ground-tackle, and the brig was soon seen with her topsail aback, waiting to cat the anchor. This done, the yards swung round, and the topsail filled. It was blowing just a good breeze for such a craft to carry whole sail on a bowline with, and away the light and active craft started, like the racer that is galloping for daily exercise. Of course there were several passages by which a vessel might quit the group of islets, some being larger and some smaller, but all having sufficient

water for a brigantine of the *Molly's* draught. Determined not to lose an inch of distance unnecessarily, Spike luffed close up to the wind, making an effort to pass out to windward of the light. In order to do this, however, it became necessary for him to make two short tacks within the haven, which brought him far enough to the southward and eastward to effect his purpose. While this was doing, the mate, who perfectly understood the object of the maneuvers, passed to the side of the lighthouse that was opposite to that on which the dwelling was placed, with a view to get a better sight of the vessel as she stood out to sea. In order to do this, however, it was necessary for the young man to pass through a broad bit of moonlight: but he trusted for his not being seen to the active manner in which all hands were employed on board the vessel. It would seem that in this respect, Mulford trusted without his host, for as the vessel drew near, he perceived that six or eight figures were on the guns of the *Swash*, or in her rigging, gesticulating eagerly, and seemingly pointing to the very spot where he stood. When the brig got fairly abeam of the light, she would not be a hundred yards distant from it; and fearful to complete the exposure of his person, which he had so inadvertently and unexpectedly commenced, our mate drew up close to the wall of the lighthouse, against which he sustained himself in a position as immovable as possible. This movement had been seen by a single seaman on board the *Swash*, and the man happened to be one of those who had landed with Spike only two hours before. His name was Barlow.

"Captain Spike, sir," called out Barlow, who was coiling up rigging on the forecastle, and was consequently obliged to call out so loud as to be heard by all on board, "yonder is a man at the foot of the lighthouse."

By this time, the moon coming out bright through an opening in the clouds, Mulford had become conscious of the risk he ran, and was drawn up, as immovable as the pile itself, against the stones of the lighthouse. Such an announcement brought everybody to leeward, and every head over the bulwarks. Spike himself sprung into the lee main-chains, where his view was unobstructed, and where Mulford saw and recognized him, even better than he was seen and recognized in his own person. All this time the brig was moving ahead.

"A man, Barlow!" exclaimed Spike, in the way one a little bewildered by an announcement expresses his surprise. "A man! that can never be. There is no one at the lighthouse, you know."

"There he stands, sir, with his back to the tower, and his face this way. His dark figure against the whitewashed stones is plain enough to be seen. Living or dead, sir, that is the mate!"

"*Living* it cannot be," answered Spike, though he gulped at the words the next moment.

A general exclamation now showed that everybody recognized the mate, whose figure, stature, dress, and even features, were by this time all tolerably distinct. The fixed attitude, however, the immovable statue-like rigidity of the form, and all the other known circumstances of Harry's case, united to produce a common and simultaneous impression among the superstitious mariners, that what they saw was but the ghostly shadow of one lately departed to the world of spirits. Even Spike was not free from this illusion, and his knees shook beneath him, there where he stood, in the channels of a vessel that he had handled like a top in so many gales and tempests. With him, however, the illusion was neither absolute nor lasting. A second thought told him it could scarcely be so, and then he found his voice. By this time the brig was nearly abreast of where Harry stood.

"You, Josh!" cried out Spike, in a voice of thunder, loud enough to startle even Mrs. Budd and Biddy in their berths.

"Lor' help us all!" answered the negro, "what *will* come next t'ing aboard dis wessel! Here I be, sir."

"Pass the fowling-piece out of my stateroom. Both barrels are loaded with ball; I'll try him, though the bullets *are* only lead."

A common exclamation of dissatisfaction escaped the men, while Josh was obeying the order. "It's no use." "You never can hurt one of them things." "Something will befall the brig on account of this," and "It's the mate's sperit, and sperits can't be harmed by lead or iron," were the sort of remarks made by the seamen, during the short interval between the issuing the order for the fowling-piece and its execution.

"There 'tis, Cap'in Spike," said Josh, passing the piece up through the rigging; "but 'twill no more shoot *that* thing than one of our carronades would blow up Gibraltar."

By this time Spike was very determined, his lips being compressed and his teeth set; he took the gun and cocked it. Then he hailed. As all that passed occurred, as it might be, at once, the brig even at that moment was little more than abreast of the immovable mate, and about eighty yards from him.

"Lighthouse, there!" cried Spike — "Living or dead, answer, or I fire."

No answer came, and no motion appeared in the dark figure that was now very plainly visible, under a bright moon, drawn in high relief against the glittering white of the tower. Spike dropped the muzzle to its aim, and fired.

So intense was the attention of all in the *Swash*, that a wink of Harry's could almost have been seen, had he betrayed even that slight sign of human infirmity at the flash and the report. The ball was flattened against a stone of the building, within a foot of the mate's body; but he did not stir. All depended now on his perfect immovability, as he well knew; and he so far commanded himself as to remain rigid as if of stone himself.

"There! one can see how it is—no life in that being," said one. "I know'd how it would end," added another. "Nothing but silver, and that cast on purpose, will ever lay it," continued a third. But Spike disregarded all. This time he resolved that his aim should be better, and he was inveterately deliberate in getting it. Just as he pulled the trigger, however, Don Juan Montefalderon touched his elbow, the piece was fired, and there stood the immovable figure as before, fixed against the tower. Spike was turning angrily to chide his Mexican friend for deranging his aim, when the report of an answering musket came back like an echo. Every eye was turned toward the figure, but it moved not. Then the humming sound of an advancing ball was heard, and a bullet passed whistling hoarsely through the rigging, and fell some distance to windward. Every head disappeared below the bulwarks. Even Spike was so far astonished as to spring in upon deck, and for a single instant, not a man was to be seen above the monkey-rail of the brig. Then Spike recovered himself, and jumped upon a gun. His first look was toward the lighthouse, now on the vessel's lee-quarter; but the spot where had so lately been seen the form of Mulford showed nothing but the glittering brightness of the whitewashed stones.

The reader will not be surprised to learn that all these events produced a strange and deep impression on board the *Molly Swash*. The few who might have thrown a little light on the matter were discreetly silent, while all that portion of the crew which was in the dark firmly believed that the spirit of the murdered mate was visiting them, in order to avenge the wrongs inflicted on it in the flesh. The superstition of sailors is as deep as it is general. All those of the *Molly*, too, were salts of the old school, sea-dogs of a past generation, properly speaking, and mariners who had got their notions in the early part of the century, when the spirit of progress was less active than it is at present.

Spike himself might have had other misgivings, and believed that he had seen the living form of his intended victim, but for the extraordinary and ghost-like echo of his last discharge. There was nothing visible, or intelligible, from which that fire could have come, and he was perfectly bewildered by the whole occurrence. An intention to round-to, as soon as through the passage, down boat and land, which had been promptly conceived when he found that his first aim had failed, was as suddenly abandoned, and he gave the

command to "board foretack"; immediately after, his call was to "pack on the brig," and not without a little tremor in his voice, as soon as he perceived that the figure had vanished. The crew was not slow to obey these orders, and in ten minutes the *Swash* was a mile from the light, standing to the northward and eastward, under a press of canvas, and with a freshening breeze.

To return to the islets. Harry, from the first, had seen that everything depended on his remaining motionless. As the people of the brig were partly in shadow, he could not, and did not, fully understand how completely he was himself exposed in consequence of the brightness of all around him, and he had at first hoped to be mistaken for some accidental resemblance to a man. His nerves were well tried by the use of the fowling-piece, but they proved equal to the necessities of the occasion. But, when an answering report came from the rear, or from the opposite side of the islet, he darted round the tower, as much taken by surprise, and overcome by wonder, as any one else who heard it. It was this rapid movement which caused his flight to be unnoticed, all the men of the brig dodging below their own bulwarks at that precise instant.

As the lighthouse was now between the mate and the brig, he had no longer any motive for trying to conceal himself. His first thought was of Rose, and, strange as it may seem, for some little time he fancied that she had found a musket in the dwelling, and discharged it, in order to aid his escape. The events had passed so swiftly, that there was no time for the cool consideration of anything, and it is not surprising that some extravagances mingled with the first surmises of all these.

On reaching the door of the house, therefore, Harry was by no means surprised at seeing Rose standing in it, gazing at the swiftly receding brigantine. He even looked for the musket, expecting to see it lying at her feet, or leaning against the wall of the building. Rose, however, was entirely unarmed, and as dependent on him for support as when he had parted from her, an hour or two before.

"Where did you find that musket, Rose, and what have you done with it?" inquired Harry, as soon as he had looked in every place he thought likely to hold such an implement.

"Musket, Harry! I have had no musket, though the report of fire-arms, near by, awoke me from a sweet sleep."

"Is this possible? I had imprudently trusted myself on the other side of the lighthouse, while the moon was behind the clouds, and when they broke suddenly away, its light betrayed me to those on board the brig. Spike fired at me twice without injuring me, when, to my astonishment, an answering report was heard from the islet. What is more, the piece was charged with a ball-cartridge, for I heard the whistling of the bullet as it passed on its way to the brig."

"And you supposed I had fired that musket?"

"Who else could I suppose had done it? You are not a very likely person to do such a thing, I will own, my love; but there are none but us two here."

"It must be Jack Tier," exclaimed Rose, suddenly.

"That is impossible, since he has left us."

"One never knows. Jack understood how anxious I was to retain him with us, and he is so capricious and full of schemes, that he may have contrived to get out of the brig as artfully as he got on board her."

"If Jack Tier be actually on this islet, I shall set him down as little else than a conjurer."

"Hist!" interrupted Rose, "what noise is that in the direction of the wharf? It sounds like an oar falling in a boat."

Mulford heard that well-known sound, as well as his companion, and, followed by Rose, he passed swiftly through the house, coming out at the front, next the wharf. The moon was still shining bright, and the mystery of the echoing report and answering shot was immediately explained. A large boat, one that pulled ten oars, at least, was just coming up to the end of the

wharf, and the manner in which its oars were unshipped and tossed announced to the mate that the crew were man-of-war's men. He walked hastily forward to meet them.

Three officers first left the boat together. The gold bands of their caps showed that they belonged to the quarter-deck, a fact that the light of the moon made apparent at once, though it was not strong enough to render features distinct. As Mulford continued to advance, however, the three officers saluted him.

"I see you have got the light under way once more," observed the leader of the party. "Last night it was as dark as Erebus in your lantern."

"The lighthouse keeper and his assistant have both been drowned," answered Mulford. "The lamps have been lit to-night by the people on the brig which has just gone out."

"Pray, sir, what brig may that be?"

"The *Molly Swash*, of New York; a craft that I lately belonged to myself, but which I have left on account of her evil doings."

"The *Molly Swash*, Stephen Spike master and owner, bound to Key West and a market, with a cargo of eight hundred barrels of flour, and that of a quality so lively and pungent that it explodes like gunpowder! I beg your pardon, Mr. Mate, for not recognizing you sooner. Have you forgotten the *Poughkeepsie*, Captain Mull, and her far-reaching Piaxhans?"

"I ought to ask your pardon, Mr. Wallace, for not recognizing *you* sooner, too. But one does not distinguish well by moonlight. I am delighted to see you, sir, and now hope that, with my assistance, a stop can be put to the career of the brig."

"What, Mr. Mate, do *you* turn against your craft?" said Wallace, under the impulsive feeling which induces all loyal men to have a distaste for treachery of every sort. "The seaman should love the very planks of his vessel."

"I fully understand you, Mr. Wallace, and will own that, for a long time, I was tied to rascality by the opinions to which you allude. But, when you come to hear my explanation, I do not fear your judgment in the least."

Mulford now led the way into the house, whither Rose had already retreated, and where she had lighted candles, and made other womanly arrangements for receiving her guests. At Harry's suggestion, some of the soup was placed over coals, to warm up for the party, and our heroine made her preparations to comfort them also with a cup of tea. While she was thus employed, Mulford gave the whole history of his connection with the brig, his indisposition to quit the latter, the full exposure of Spike's treason, his own desertion, if desertion it could be called, the loss of the schooner, and his abandonment on the rock, and the manner in which he had been finally relieved. It was scarcely possible to relate all these matters, and altogether avoid allusions to the schemes of Spike in connection with Rose, and the relation in which our young man himself stood toward her. Although Mulford touched on these points with great delicacy, it was a seaman talking to seamen, and he could not entirely throw aside the frankness of the profession. Ashore men live in the privacy of their own domestic circles, and their secret thoughts are "family secrets," of which it has passed into a proverb to say that there are always some, even in the best of these communities. On shipboard, or in the camp, it is very different.

The close contact in which men are brought with each other, the necessity that exists for opening the heart, and expanding the charities, gets in time to influence the whole character, and a certain degree of frankness and simplicity takes the place of the reserve and acting that might have been quickened in the same individual, under a different system of schooling. But Mulford was frank by nature as well as by his sea-education, and his companions on this occasion were pretty well possessed of all his wishes and plans in reference to Rose, even to his hope of falling in with the chaplain of the *Poughkeepsie*, by the time his story was all told. The fact

that Rose was occupied in another room, most of the time, had made these explanations all the easier, and spared her many a blush. As for the man-of-war's men, they listened to the tale with manly interest and a generous sympathy.

"I am glad to hear your explanation, Mr. Mate," said Wallace, cordially, as soon as Harry had done, "and there's my hand, in proof that I approve of your course. I own to a radical dislike of a turncoat, or a traitor to his craft, Brother Hollins"—looking at the elder of his two companions, one of whom was the midshipman who had originally accompanied him on board the *Swash*—"and am glad to find that our friend Mulford here is neither. A true-hearted sailor can be excused for deserting even his own ship, under such circumstances."

"I am glad to hear even this little concession from you, Wallace," answered Hollins, good-naturedly, and speaking with a mild expression of benevolence, on a very calm and thoughtful countenance. "Your mess is as heterodox as any I ever sailed with, on the subject of our duties, in this respect."

"I hold it to be a sailor's duty to stick by his ship, *reverend* and dear sir."

This mode of address, which was used by the "ship's gentleman" in the cant of the ward room, as a pleasantry of an old shipmate, for the two had long served together in other vessels, at once announced to Harry that he saw the very chaplain for whose presence he had been so anxiously wishing. The "reverend and dear sir" smiled at the sally of his friend, a sort of thing to which he was very well accustomed, but he answered with a gravity and point that, it is presumed, he thought befitting his holy office.

It may be well to remark here, the Rev. Mr. Hollins was not one of the "launched chaplains," that used to do discredit to the navy of his country, or a layman dubbed with such a title, and rated that he might get the pay and become a boon companion of the captain, at the table and in his frolics ashore. Those days are gone by, and ministers of the gospel are now really employed to care for the souls of the poor sailors, who so long have been treated by others, and have treated themselves indeed, as if they were beings without souls altogether. In these particulars, the world has certainly advanced, though the wise and the good, in looking around them, may feel more cause for astonishment in contemplating what it once was, than to rejoice in what it actually is. But intellect has certainly improved in the aggregate, if not in its especial dispensations, and men will not now submit to abuses that within the recollections of a generation they even cherished. In reference to the more intellectual appointments of a ship of war, the commander excepted, for, we contend, he who directs all ought to possess the most capacity, but, in reference to what are ordinarily believed to be the more intellectual appointments of a ship of war, the surgeon and the chaplain, we well recollect opinions that were expressed to us, many years since, by two officers of the highest rank known to the service.

"When I first entered the navy," said one of these old Benbows, "if I had occasion for the amputation of a leg, and the question lay between the carpenter and the doctor, d——e, but I would have tried the carpenter first, for I felt pretty certain he would have been the most likely to get through with the job." "In old times," said the other, "when a chaplain joined a ship, the question immediately arose, whether the mess were to convert the chaplain, or the chaplain the mess; and the mess generally got the best of it." There was very little exaggeration in either of these opinions. But, happily, all this is changed vastly for the better, and a navy-surgeon is necessarily a man of education and experience; in very many instances, men of high talents are to be found among them; while chaplains can do something better than play at backgammon, eat terrapins, when in what may be called terrapin-ports, and drink brandy and water, or pure Bob Smith.*

* In the palmy days of the service, when Robert Smith was so long Secretary of the Navy, the ship's whisky went by this familiar *sobriquet*.

"It is a great mistake, Wallace, to fancy that the highest duty a man owes is either to his ship or to his country," observed the Rev. Mr. Hollins, quietly. "The highest duty of each and all of us is to God; and whatever conflicts with that duty must be avoided as a transgression of His laws, and consequently as sin."

"You surprise me, reverend and dear sir! I do not remember ever to have heard you broach such opinions before, which might be interpreted to mean that a fellow might be disloyal to his flag."

"Because the opinion might be liable to misinterpretation. Still, I do not go as far as many of my friends on this subject. If Decatur ever really said, 'Our country, right or wrong,' he said what might be just enough, and creditable enough, in certain cases, and taken with the fair limitations that he probably intended should accompany the sentiment; but if he meant it as an absolute and controlling principle, it was not possible to be more in error. In this last sense, such a rule of conduct might, and in old times often would, have justified idolatry; nay, it *is* a species of idolatry in itself, since it is putting country before God. Sailors may not always be able to make the just distinctions in these cases, but the quarter-deck should be so, *ir*reverend and dear sir."

Wallace laughed, and then he turned the discourse to the subject more properly before them.

"I understand you to say, Mr. Mulford," he remarked, that, in your opinion, the *Swash* has gone to try to raise the unfortunate Mexican schooner, a second time, from the depths of the ocean?"

"From the rock on which she lies. Under the circumstances, I hardly think he would have come hither for the chain and cable unless with some such object. We know, moreover, that such *was* his intention when he left the brig."

"And you can take us to the very spot where that wreck lies?"

"Without any difficulty. Her masts are partly out of water, and we hung on to them, in a boat, no later than last night, or this morning rather."

"So far, well. Your conduct in all this affair will be duly appreciated, and Captain Mull will not fail to represent it in a right point of view to the government."

"Where is the ship, sir? I looked for her most anxiously without success, last evening; nor had Jack Tier, the little fellow I have named to you, any better luck, though I sent him aloft, as high as the lantern in the lighthouse, for that purpose."

"The ship is off here to the northward and westward, some six leagues or so. At sunset she may have been a little further. We have supposed that the *Swash* would be coming back hither, and had laid a trap for her, which came very near taking her alive."

"What is the trap you mean, sir? though taking Stephen Spike alive is sooner said than done."

"Our plan has been to catch him with our boats. With the greater draught of water of the *Poughkeepsie* and the heels of your brig, sir, a regular chase about these reefs, as we know from experience, would be almost hopeless. It was therefore necessary to use head work and some man-of-war traverses in order to lay hold of him. Yesterday afternoon we hoisted out three cutters, manned them, and made sail in them, all under our lugs, working up against the trades. Each boat took its own course, one going off the west end of the reef, one going more to the eastward, while I came this way, to look in at the Dry Tortugas. Spike will be lucky if he do not fall in with our third cutter, which is under the fourth lieutenant, should he stand on far on the same tack as that on which he left this place. Let him try his fortune, however. As for our boat, as soon as I saw the lamps burning in the lantern, I made the best of my way hither, and got sight of the brig just as she loosened her sails. Then I took in my lugs, and came on with the oars. Had we continued under our canvas, with this breeze, I almost think we might have overhauled the rascal."

"It would have been impossible, sir. The moment he got a sight of your sails, he would have been off in a contrary direction, and that brig really seems to

fly, whenever there is a pressing occasion for her to move. You did the wisest thing you could have done, and barely missed him, as it was. He has not seen you at all, as it is, and will be all the less on his guard, against the next visit from the ship."

"Not seen me! Why, sir, the fellow fired at us twice with a musket; why he did not use a carronade, is more than I can tell."

"Excuse me, Mr. Wallace; those two shots were intended for me, though I now fully comprehend why you answered them."

"Answered them! yes, indeed; who would not answer such a salute, and gun for gun, if he had a chance? I certainly thought he was firing at us, and having a musket between my legs, I let fly in return, and even the chaplain here will allow that was returning 'good for evil.' But explain your meaning."

Mulford now went into the details of the incidents connected with his coming into the moonlight, at the foot of the light-house. That he was not mistaken as to the party for whom the shots were intended, was plain enough to him, from the words that passed aloud among the people of the *Swash*, as well as from the circumstance that both balls struck the stones of the tower quite near him. This statement explained everything to Wallace, who now fully comprehended the cause and motive of each incident.

It was now near eleven, and Rose had prepared the table for supper. The gentlemen of the *Poughkeepsie* manifested great interest in the movements of the Hebe-like little attendant who was caring for their wants. When the cloth was to be laid, the midshipman offered his assistance, but his superior directed him to send a hand or two up from the wharf, where the crew of the cutter were lounging or sleeping after their cruise. These men had been thought of, too, and a vessel filled with smoking soup was taken to them by one of their own number.

The supper was as cheerful as it was excellent. The dry humor of Wallace, the mild intelligence of the chaplain, the good sense of Harry, and the spirited information of Rose, contributed, each in its particular way, to make the meal memorable in more senses than one. The laugh came easily at that table, and it was twelve o'clock before the party thought of breaking up.

The dispositions for the night were soon made. Rose returned to her little room, where she could now sleep in comfort, and without apprehension. The gentlemen made the best disposition of their persons that circumstances allowed; each finding something on which to repose, that was preferable to a plank. As for the men, they were accustomed to hard fare, and enjoyed their present good luck, to the top of their bent. It was quite late before they had done "spinning their yarns," and "cracking their jokes," around the pot of turtle-soup, and the can of grog that succeeded it. By half past twelve, however, everybody was asleep.

Mulford was the first person afoot the following morning. He left the house just as the sun rose, and perceiving that the "coast was clear" of sharks, he threw off his light attire and plunged into the sea. Refreshed with this indulgence, he was returning towards the building, when he met the chaplain coming in quest of him. This gentleman, a man of real piety, and of great discretion, had been singularly struck, on the preceding night, with the narrative of our young mate; and he had not failed to note the allusions, slight as they were, and delicately put as they had been, to himself. He saw, at once, the propriety of marrying a couple so situated, and now sought Harry, with a view to bring about so desirable an event, by intimating his entire willingness to officiate. It is scarcely necessary to say that very few words were wanting to persuade the young man to fall into his views; and as to Rose, he had handed her a short note on the subject, which he was of opinion would be likely to bring her to the same way of thinking.

An hour later, all the officers, Harry and Rose, were assembled in what might be termed the lighthouse parlor. The

Rev. Mr. Hollins had neither band, gown, nor surplice; but he had what was far better, feeling and piety. Without a prayer-book he never moved; and he read the marriage ceremony with a solemnity that was communicated to all present. The ring was that which had been used at the marriage of Rose's parents, and which she wore habitually, though not on the left hand. In a word, Harry and Rose were as firmly and legally united, on that solitary and almost unknown islet, as could have been the case, had they stood up before the altar of mother Trinity itself, with a bishop to officiate, and a legion of attendants. After the compliments which succeeded the ceremony the whole party sat down to breakfast.

If the supper had been agreeable, the morning meal was not less so. Rose was timid and blushing, as became a bride, though she could not but feel how much more respectable her position became under the protection of Harry as his wife, than it had been while she was only his betrothed. The most delicate deportment, on the part of her companions, soon relieved her embarrassment, however, and the breakfast passed off without cause for an unhappy moment.

"The ship's standing in toward the light, sir," reported the cockswain of the cutter, as the party was still lingering around the table, as if unwilling to bring so pleasant a meal to a close. "Since the mist has broke away, we see her, sir, even to her ports and dead-eyes."

"In that case, Sam, she can't be very far off," answered Wallace. "Ay, there goes a gun from her, at this moment, as as much as to say, 'What has become of all my boats?' Run down and let off a musket; perhaps she will make out to hear that, as we must be rather to windward, if anything."

The signal was given and understood. A quarter of an hour later, the *Poughkeepsie* began to shorten sail. Then Wallace stationed himself in the cutter, in the center of one of the passages, signaling the ship to come on. Ten minutes later still, the noble craft came into the haven, passing the still burning light, with her topsails just lifting; and making a graceful sweep under very reduced sail, she came to the wind very near the spot where the *Swash* had lain only ten hours before, and dropped an anchor.

CHAPTER XIII.

"The gull has found her place on shore;
The sun gone down again to rest;
And all is still but ocean's roar;
There stands the man unbless'd.
But see, he moves—he turns, as asking where
His mates? Why looks he with that piteous stare?"
—DANA.

SUPERSTITION would seem to be a consequence of a state of being, in which so much is shadowed forth, while so little is accurately known. Our far-reaching thoughts range over the vast fields of created things, without penetrating to the secret cause of the existence of even a blade of grass. We can analyze all substances that are brought into our crucible, tell their combinations and tendencies, give a scientific history of their formation, so far as it is connected with secondary facts, their properties, and their uses; but in each and all there is a latent natural cause, that baffles all our inquiries, and tells us that we are merely men. This is just as true in morals as in physics—no man living being equal to attaining the very faith that is necessary to his salvation, without the special aid of the Spirit of the Godhead; and even with that mighty support, trusting implictly for all that is connected with a future that we are taught to believe is eternal, to "the substance of things *hoped* for, and the evidence of things *unseen*." In a word, this earthly probation of ours was intended for finite beings, in the sense of our present existence, leaving far more to be conjectured than is understood.

Ignorance and superstition ever bear a close, and even a mathematical, relation to each other. The degrees of the one are regulated by the degrees of the other. He who knows the least believes the most; while he who has seen the most, without

the intelligence to comprehend that which he has seen, feels, perhaps, the strongest inclination to refer those things, which to him are mysteries, to the supernatural and marvelous. Sailors have been, from time immemorial, more disposed than men of their class on the land, to indulge in this weakness, which is probably heightened by the circumstance of their living constantly and vividly in the presence of powers that menace equally their lives and their means, without being in any manner subject to their control.

Spike, for a seaman of his degree of education, was not particularly addicted to the weakness to which we have just alluded. Nevertheless, he was not altogether free from it; and recent circumstances contributed to dispose him so much the more to admit a feeling which, like sin itself, is ever the most apt to insinuate itself at moments of extraordinary moral imbecility, and through the openings left by previous transgression. As his brig stood off from the light, the captain paced the deck, greatly disturbed by what had just passed, and unable to account for it. The boat of the *Poughkeepsie* was entirely concealed by the islet, and there existing no obvious motive for wishing to return, in order to come at the truth, not a thought to that effect, for one moment, crossed the mind of the smuggler. So far from this, indeed, were his wishes, that the *Molly* did not seem to him to go half as fast as usual, in his keen desire to get further and further from a spot where such strange incidents had occurred.

As for the men forward, no argument was wanting to make *them* believe that something supernatural had just passed before their eyes. It was known to them all, that Mulford had been left on a naked rock, some thirty miles from that spot; and it was not easy to understand how he could now be at the Dry Tortugas, planted, as it might be, on purpose to show himself to the brig, against the tower, in the bright moonlight, "like a pictur' hung up for his old shipmates to look at."

Somber were the tales that were related that night among them, many of which related to the sufferings of men abandoned on desert islands; and all of which bordered, more or less, on the supernatural. The crew connected the disappearance of the boat with Mulford's apparition, though the logical inference would have been, that the body which required planks to transport it, could scarcely be classed with anything of the world of spirits. The links in arguments, however, are seldom respected by the illiterate and vulgar, who jump to their conclusions in cases of the marvelous, much as politicians find an expression of the common mind in the prepared opinions of the few who speak for them, totally disregarding the dissenting silence of the million. While the men were first comparing their opinions on that which, to them, seemed to be so extraordinary, the Señor Montefalderon joined the captain in his walk, and dropped into a discourse touching the events which had attended their departure from the haven of the Dry Tortugas.

In this conversation, Don Juan most admirably preserved his countenance, as well as his self-command, effectually preventing the suspicion of any knowledge on his part that was not common to them both.

"You did leave the port with the salutes observed," the Mexican commenced, with the slightest accent of a foreigner, or just enough to show that he was not speaking in his mother-tongue; "salutes paid and returned."

"Do you call that saluting, Don Wan? To me that infernal shot sounded more like an echo than anything else."

"And to what do *you* ascribe it, Don Esteban?"

"I wish I could answer that question. Sometimes I begin to wish I had not left my mate on that naked rock."

"There is still time to repair the last wrong; we shall go within a few miles of the place where the Señor Enrique was left, and I can take the yawl, with two men, and go in search of him, while you are at work on the wreck."

"Do you believe it possible that he can be still there?" demanded Spike, looking suddenly and intently at his companion,

while his mind was strangely agitated between hatred and dread. "If he is there, who and what was *he* that we all saw so plainly at the foot of the lighthouse?"

"How should he have left the rock? He was without food or water; and no man, in all his vigor, could swim this distance. I see no means of his getting here."

"Unless some wrecker or turtler fell in with him and took him off. Ay, ay, Don Wan, I left him that much of a chance, at least. No man can say I *murdered* my mate."

"I am not aware, Don Esteban, that any one *has* said so hard a thing of you. Still, we have seen neither wrecker nor turtler since we have been here; and that lessens the excellent chance you left Don Enrique."

"There is no occasion, señor, to be so particular," growled Spike, a little sullenly, in reply. "The chance, I say, was a *good* one, when you consider how many of them devils of wreckers hang about these reefs. Let this brig only get fast on a rock, and they would turn up like sharks all around us, each with his maw open for salvage. But this is neither here nor there; what puzzles me was what we saw at the light, half an hour since, and the musket that was fired back at us! I *know* that the figure at the foot of the tower did not fire, for my eye was on him from first to last, and he had no arms. You were on the island a good bit and must have known if the lighthouse keeper was there or not, Don Wan."

"The lighthouse keeper *was* there, Don Esteban—but he was in his *grave*."

"Ay, ay, one, I know was drowned and buried with the rest of them; there might, however, have been more than one. You saw none of the people that had gone to Key West in or about the house, Don Wan?"

"None. If any persons have left the Tortugas to go to Key West, within a few days, not one of them has yet returned."

"So I supposed. No, it can be none of *them*. Then I saw his face as plainly as ever I saw it by moonlight, from aft, for'ard. What is your opinion about seeing the dead walk on the 'arth, Don Wan?"

"That I have never seen any such thing myself, Don Esteban, and consequently know nothing about it."

"So I supposed; I find it hard to believe it, I do. It may be a warning to keep us from coming any more to the Dry Tortugas; and I must say I have little heart for returning to this place, after all that has fell out here. We can go to the wreck, fish up the doubloons, and be off for Yucatan. Once in one of your ports, I make no question that the merits of the *Molly* will make themselves understood, and that we shall soon agree on a price."

"What use could we put the brig to, Don Esteban, if we had her all ready for sea?"

"That is a strange question to ask in time of war. Give *me* such a craft as the *Molly*, with sixty or eighty men on board her, in a war like this, and her 'arnin's should not fall short of half a million within a twelvemonth."

"Could we engage you to take charge of her, Don Esteban?"

"That would be ticklish work, Don Wan. But we can see. No one knows what he will do until he is tried. In for a penny, in for a pound. A fellow never knows! Ha! ha! ha! Don Wan, we live in a strange world—yes, in a strange world."

"We live in strange *times*, Don Esteban, as the situation of my poor country proves. But let us talk this matter over a little more in confidence."

And they did thus discuss the subject. It was a singular spectacle to see an honorable man, one full of zeal of the purest nature in behalf of his own country, sounding a traitor as to the terms on which he might be induced to do all the harm he could to those who claimed his allegiance. Such sights, however, are often seen; our own especial objects too frequently blinding us to the obligations that we owe morality, so far as not to be instrumental in effecting even what we conceive to be good, by questionable agencies. But the Señor Montefalderon kept in view, principally, his desire to be useful to Mexico,

blended a little too strongly, perhaps, with the wishes of a man who was born near the sun, to avenge his wrongs, real or fancied.

While this dialogue was going on between Spike and his passenger as they paced the quarter-deck, one quite as characteristic occurred in the galley, within twenty feet of them; Simon, the cook, and Josh, the steward, being the interlocutors. As they talked secrets, they conferred together with closed doors, though few were ever disposed to encounter the smoke, grease, and fumes of their narrow domains, unless called thither by hunger.

"What *you* t'ink of dis matter, Josh?" demanded Simon, whose skull having the well-known density of his race, did not let internal ideas out, or external ideas in, as readily as most men's. "Our young mate *was* at de lighthouse beyond all controversy; and how can he be den on dat rock ober yonder, too?"

"Dat is imposserbul," answered Josh; "derefore I says it isn't true. I surposes you know dat what is imposserbul isn't true, Simon. Nobody can't be out yonder and down here at de same time. Dat is imposserbul, Simon. But what I wants to intermate to you, will explain all dis difficulty; and it do show de raal superiority of a colored man over de white population. Now you mark my words, cook, and be full of admiration. Jack Tier came back along wid de Mexican gentle'em, in my anchor-watch, dis very night! You see, in de fust place, ebbery-t'ing come to pass in nigger's watch."

Here the two dark-skinned worthies haw haw'd to their hearts' content; laughing very much as a magistrate or minister of the Gospel might be fancied to laugh the first time he saw a clown at a circus. The merriment of a negro will have its course, in spite of ghosts, or of anything else; and neither the cook nor the steward dreamed of putting in another syllable until their laugh was fairly and duly ended. Then the cook made his remarks.

"How Jack Tier comin' back explain der differculty, Josh?" asked Simon.

"Didn't Jack go away wid Miss Rose and de mate, in de boat dat got adrift, you know, in Jack's watch on deck?"

Here the negroes laughed again, their imaginations happening to picture to each, at the same instant, the mystification about the boat; Biddy having told Josh in confidence the manner in which the party had returned to the brig, while he and Simon were asleep; which fact the steward had already communicated to the cook. To these two beings, of an order in nature different from all around them, and of a simplicity and of habits that scarce placed them on a level with the intelligence of the humblest white man, all these circumstances had a sort of mysterious connection, out of which peeped much the most conspicuously to their faculties the absurdity of the captain's imagining that a boat had got adrift, which had, in truth, been taken away by human hands. Accordingly they laughed it out; and when they had done laughing, they returned again to the matter before them with renewed interest in the subject.

"Well, how all dat explain dis differculty?" repeated Simon.

"In dis werry manner, cook," returned the steward, with a little dignity in his manner. "Ebberyt'ing depend on understandin', I s'pose you know. If Mr. Mulford got taken off dat rock by Miss Rose and Jack Tier, wid de boat, and den dey comes here altogedder; and den Jack Tier, he get on board and tell Biddy all dis matter, and den Biddy tell Josh, and den Josh tell de cook—what for you surprise, you black debbil, one bit?"

"Dat all!" exclaimed Simon.

"Dat just all—dat ebbery bit of it, don't I say."

Here Simon burst into such a fit of loud laughter that it induced Spike himself to shove aside the galley-door, and thrust his own frowning visage into the dark hole within, to inquire the cause.

"What's the meaning of this uproar?" demanded the captain, all the more excited because he felt that things had reached a pass that would not permit him to laugh himself. "Do you fancy yourself on the Hook, or at the Five Points?"

The Hook and the Five Points are two pieces of tabooed territory, within the limits of the good town of Manhattan, that are getting to be renowned for their rascality and orgies. They probably want nothing but the proclamation of a governor in vindication of their principles, annexed to a pardon of some of their unfortunate children, to render both classical. If we continue to make much further progress in political logic, and in the same direction as that in which we have already proceeded so far, neither will probably long be in want of this illustration. Votes can be given by the virtuous citizens of the anti-rent districts, and votes contain the essence of all such principles, as well as of their glorification.

"Do you fancy yourselves on the Hook, or at the Five Points?" demanded Spike, angrily.

"Lor', no sir!" answered Simon, laughing at each pause with all his heart. "Only laughs a little at *ghost*—dat all, sir."

"Laugh at ghost? Is that a subject to laugh at? Have a care, you black rascal, or he will visit you in your galley here, when you will least want to see him."

"No care much for *him*, sir," returned Simon, laughing away as hard as ever. "*Sich* a ghost oughtn't to skear little baby."

"*Such* a ghost? And what do you know of *this* ghost more than any other?"

"Well, I seed him, Cap'in Spike; and what a body sees he is acquainted wid."

"You saw an image that looked as much like Mr. Mulford, my late mate, as one timber-head in this brig is like another."

"Yes, sir, he like enough—must say *dat*—so wery like couldn't see any difference."

As Simon concluded this remark, he burst out into another fit of laughter, in which Josh joined him, heart and soul, as it might be. The uninitiated reader is not to imagine the laughter of those blacks to be very noisy, or to be raised on a sharp, high key. They *could* make the welkin ring, in sudden bursts of merriment, on occasion; but, at a time like this, they rather caused their diversion to be developed by sounds that came from the depths of their chests. A gleam of suspicion that these blacks were acquainted with some fact that it might be well for him to know, shot across the mind of Spike; but he was turned from further inquiry by a remark of Don Juan, who intimated that the mirth of such persons never had much meaning to it, expressing at the same time a desire to pursue the more important subject in which they were engaged. Admonishing the blacks to be more guarded in their manifestations of merriment, the captain closed the door on them, and resumed his walk up and down the quarter-deck. As soon as left to themselves, the blacks broke out afresh, though in a way so guarded as to confine their mirth to the galley.

"Cap'in Spike t'ink *dat* a ghost!" exclaimed Simon, with contempt.

"Guess if he see *raal*, he find 'e difference," answered Josh. "One look at raal sperit wort' two at dis object."

Simon's eyes now opened like two saucers, and they gleamed, by the light of the lamp they had, like dark balls of condensed curiosity, blended with awe, on his companion.

"You ebber see him, Josh?" he asked, glancing over each shoulder hurriedly, as it might be, to make sure that he could not see "him," too.

"How you t'ink I get so far down the wale of life, Simon, and nebber see sich a t'ing? I seed t'ree of the crew of the *Maria Sheffington*, that was drowned by deir boat's capsizin', when we lay at Gibraltar, jest as plain as I see you now. Then—"

But it is unnecessary to repeat Josh's experiences in this way, with which he continued to entertain and terrify Simon for the next half hour. This is just the difference between ignorance and knowledge. While Spike himself, and every man in his brig who belonged forward, had strong misgivings as to the earthly character of the figure they had seen at the foot of the lighthouse, these negroes laughed at their delusion, because they happened to be in the secret of Mulford's

escape from the rock, and of that of his actual presence at the Tortugas. When, however, the same superstitious feeling was brought to bear on circumstances that lay *without* the sphere of their exact information, they became just as dependent and helpless as all around them; more so, indeed, inasmuch as their previous habits and opinions disposed them to a more profound credulity.

It was midnight before any of the crew of the *Swash* sought their rest that night. The captain had to remind them that a day of extraordinary toil was before them ere he could get one even to quit the deck; and when they did go below, it was to continue to discuss the subject of what they had seen at the Dry Tortugas. It appeared to be the prevalent opinion among the people, that the late event foreboded evil to the *Swash*, and long as most of these men had served in the brig, and much as they had become attached to her, had she gone into port that night, nearly every man forward would have run before morning. But fatigue and wonder at length produced their effect, and the vessel was silent as was usual at that hour. Spike himself lay down in his clothes, as he had done ever since Mulford had left him; and the brig continued to toss the spray from her bows, as she bore gallantly up against the trades, working her way to windward. The light was found to be of great service, as it indicated the position of the reef, though it gradually sunk in the western horizon, until, near morning, it fell entirely below it.

At this hour Spike appeared on deck again, where, for the first time since their interview on the morning of Harry's and Rose's escape he laid his eyes on Jack Tier. The little dumpling-looking fellow was standing in the waist, with his arms folded sailor-fashion, as composedly as if nothing had occurred to render his meeting with the captain any way of a doubtful character. Spike approached near the person of the steward, whom he surveyed from head to foot, with a sort of contemptuous superiority, ere he spoke.

"So, Master Tier," at length the captain commenced, "you have deigned to turn out at last, have you? I hope the day's duty you've forgotten will help to pay for the lighthouse boat that I understand you've lost me, also."

"What signifies a great clumsy boat, that the brig couldn't hoist in nor tow," answered Jack, coolly, turning short round at the same time, but not condescending to "uncoil" his arms as he did so, a mark of indifference that would probably have helped to mystify the captain, had he even actually suspected that anything was wrong beyond the supposed accident to the boat in question. "If you had had the boat astarn, Captain Spike, an order would have been given to cut it adrift the first time the brig made sail on the wind."

"Nobody knows, Jack; that boat would have been very useful to us while at work about the wreck. You never even turned out this morning to let me know where that craft lay, as you promised to do, but left us to find it out by our wits."

"There was no occasion for my telling you anything about it, sir, when the mastheads were to be seen above water. As soon as I heard that them 'ere mastheads was out of water, I turned over and went to sleep upon it. A man can't be on the doctor's list and on duty at the same time."

Spike looked hard at the little steward, but he made no further allusion to his being off duty, or to his failing to stand pilot to the brig as she came through the passage in quest of the schooner's remains. The fact was, that he had discovered the mastheads himself, just as he was on the point of ordering Jack to be called, having allowed him to remain in his berth to the last moment after his watch, according to a species of implied faith that is seldom disregarded among seamen. Once busied on the wreck, Jack was forgotten, having little to do in common with any one on board, but that which the captain termed the "women's mess."

"Come aft, Jack," resumed Spike, after a considerable pause, during the whole of which he had stood regarding the little

steward as if studying his person, and through that his character. "Come aft to the trunk; I wish to catechise you a bit."

"Catechise!" repeated Tier, in an undertone, as he followed the captain to the place mentioned. "It's a long time since I've done anything at *that!*"

"Ay, come hither," resumed Spike, seating himself at his ease on the trunk, while Jack stood near by, his arms still folded, and his rotund little form as immovable under the plunges that the lively brig made into the head-seas that she was obliged to meet, as if a timber head in the vessel itself. "You keep your sea-legs well, Jack, short as they are."

"No wonder for that, Captain Spike; for the last twenty years I've scarce passed a twelvemonth ashore; and what I did before that, no one can better tell than yourself, since we were ten good years shipmates."

"So you say, Jack, though I do not remember *you* as well as you seem to remember *me*. Do you not make the time too long?"

"Not a day, sir. Ten good and happy years did we sail together, Captain Spike; and all that time in this yer—"

"Hush—h-u-s-h, man, hush! There is no need of telling the *Molly's* age to everybody. I may wish to sell her some day, and then her great experience will be no recommendation. You should recollect that the *Molly* is a female, and the ladies do not like to hear of their ages after five-and-twenty."

Jack made no answer, but he dropped his arms to their natural position, seeming to wait the captain's communication, first referring to his tobacco-box and taking a fresh quid.

"If you was with me in the brig, Jack, at the time you mention," continued Spike, after another long and thoughtful pause, "you must remember many little things that I don't wish to have known; especially while Mrs. Budd and her handsome niece is aboard here."

"I understand you, Captain Spike. The ladies shall l'arn no more from me than they know already."

"Thank'e for that, Jack—thank'e with all my heart. Shipmates of our standing ought to be fast friends, and so you'll find me, if you'll only sail under the true colors, my man."

At that moment Jack longed to let the captain know how strenuously he had insisted that very night on rejoining his vessel; and this at a time, too, when the brig was falling into disrepute. But this he could not do, without betraying the secret of the lovers—so he chose to say nothing.

"There is no use in blabbing all a man knows, and the galley is a sad place for talking. Galley news is poor news, I suppose you know, Jack."

"I've hear'n say as much on board o' man-of-war. It's a great place for the officers to meet and talk, and smoke, in Uncle Sam's crafts; and what a body hears in such places, is pretty much newspaper stuff, I do suppose."

"Ay, ay, that's it; not to be thought of half an hour after it has been spoken. Here's a doubloon for you, Jack; and all for the sake of old times. Now, tell me, my little fellow, how do the ladies come on? Doesn't Miss Rose get over her mourning on account of the mate? Aren't we to have the pleasure of seein' her on deck soon?"

"I can't answer for the minds and fancies of young women, Captain Spike. They are difficult to understand; and I would rather not meddle with what I can't understand."

"Poh, poh, man; you must get over that. You might be of great use to me, Jack, in a very delicate affair — for you know how it is with women; they must be handled as a man would handle this brig among breakers; Rose, in partic'lar, is as skittish as a colt."

"Stephen Spike," said Jack, solemnly, but on so low a key that it entirely changed his usually harsh and cracked voice to one that sounded soft, if not absolutely pleasant, "do you never think of hereafter? Your days are almost run; a very few years, in your calling it may be a very few weeks, or a few hours, and time will be done with you and eternity

will commence. Do you never think of a hereafter?"

Spike started to his feet, gazing at Jack intently; then he wiped the perspiration from his face, and began to pace the deck rapidly, muttering to himself—"This has been a most accursed night! First the mate, and now *this!* Blast me, but I thought it was a voice from the grave! Graves! can't they keep those that belong to them, or have rocks and waves no graves?"

What more passed through the mind of the captain must remain a secret, for he kept it to himself; nor did he take any further notice of his companion. Jack, finding that he was unobserved, passed quietly below, and took the place in his berth, which he had only temporarily abandoned.

Just as the day dawned the *Swash* reached the vicinity of the wreck again. Sail was shortened, and the brig stood in until near enough for the purpose of her commander, when she was hove-to, so near the mast-heads that, by lowering the yawl, a line was sent out to the foremast, and the brig was hauled close alongside. The direction of the reef at that point formed a lee; and the vessel lay in water sufficiently smooth for her object.

This was done soon after the sun had risen, and Spike now ordered all hands called, and began his operations in earnest. By sounding carefully around the schooner when last here, he had ascertained her situation to his entire satisfaction. She had settled on a shelf of a reef, in such a position that her bows lay in a sort of cradle, while her stern was several feet nearer to the surface than the opposite extremity. This last fact was apparent, indeed, by the masts themselves, the lower mast aft being several feet out of water, while the foremast was entirely buried, leaving nothing but the foretopmast exposed. On these great premises Spike had laid the foundation of the practical problem he intended to solve.

No expectation existed of ever getting the schooner afloat again. All that Spike and Señor Montefalderon now aimed at was to obtain the doubloons, which the former thought could be got at in the following manner. He knew that it would be much easier handling the wreck, so far as its gravity was concerned, while the hull continued submerged. He also knew that one end could be raised with a comparatively trifling effort, so long as the other rested on the rock. Under these circumstances, he proposed merely to get slings around the after-body of the schooner, as near her stern-post, indeed, as would be safe, and to raise that extremity of the vessel to the surface, leaving most of the weight of the craft to rest on the bows. The difference between the power necessary to effect this much, and that which would be required to raise the whole wreck, would be like the difference in power necessary to turn over a log with one end resting on the ground, and turning the same log by lifting it bodily in the arms, and turning it in the air. With the stern once above water, it would be easy to come at the bag of doubloons, which Jack Tier had placed in a locker above the transoms.

The first thing was to secure the brig properly, in order that she might bear the necessary strain. This was done very much as has been described already, in the account of the manner in which she was secured and supported in order to raise the schooner at the Dry Tortugas. An anchor was laid abreast and to windward, and purchases were brought to the masts, as before. Then the bight of the chain brought from the Tortugas was brought under the schooner's keel, and counter-purchases, leading from both the foremast and mainmast of the brig, were brought to it, and set taut. Spike now carefully examined all his fastenings, looking to his cables as well as his mechanical power aloft, heaving in upon this, and veering out upon that, in order to bring the *Molly* square to her work; after which he ordered the people to knock-off for their dinners. By that time it was high moon.

While Stephen Spike was thus employed upon the wreck, matters and things were not neglected at the Tortugas. The *Poughkeepsie* had no sooner

anchored than Wallace went on board and made his report. Captain Mull then sent for Mulford, with whom he had a long personal conference. This officer was getting gray, and consequently he had acquired experience. It was evident to Harry, at first, that he was regarded as one who had been willingly engaged in an unlawful pursuit, but who had abandoned it to push dearer interests in another quarter. It was some time before the commander of the sloop-of-war could divest himself of this opinion, though it gradually gave way before the frankness of the mate's manner, and the manliness, simplicity, and justice of his sentiments. Perhaps Rose had some influence also in bringing about this favorable change.

Wallace did not fail to let it be known that turtle-soup was to be had ashore; and many was the guest our heroine had to supply with that agreeable compound in the course of the morning. Jack Tier had manifested so much skill in the preparation of the dish that its reputation soon extended to the cabin, and the captain was induced to land in order to ascertain how far rumor was or was not a liar on this interesting occasion. So ample was the custom, indeed, that Wallace had the consideration to send one of the ward-room servants to the lighthouse in order to relieve Rose from a duty that was getting to be a little irksome. She was "seeing company" as a bride in a novel and rather unpleasant manner; and it was in consequence of a suggestion of the "ship's gentleman" that the remains of the turtle were transferred to the vessel, and were put into the coppers, *secundum artem*, by the regular cooks.

It was after tickling his palate with a bowl of the soup, and enjoying a half hour's conversation with Rose, that Captain Mull summoned Harry to a final consultation on the subject of their future proceedings. By this time the commander of the *Poughkeepsie* was in a better humor with his new acquaintance, more disposed to believe him, and infinitely more inclined to listen to his suggestions and advice than he had been in their previous interviews. Wallace was present in his character of "ship's gentleman," or, as having nothing to do, while his senior, the first lieutenant, was working like a horse on board the vessel in the execution of his round of daily duties.

At this consultation the parties came into a right understanding of each other's views and characters. Captain Mull was slow to yield his confidence, but when he did bestow it he bestowed it sailor-fashion, or with all his heart. Satisfied at last that he had to do with a young man of honor, and one who was true to the flag, he consulted freely with our mate, asked his advice, and was greatly influenced in the formation of his final decision by the opinions that Harry modestly advanced, maintaining them, however, with solid arguments, and reasons that every seaman could comprehend.

Mulford knew the plans of Spike by means of his own communications with the Señor Montefalderon. Once acquainted with the project of his old commander, it was easy for him to calculate the time it would require to put them in execution, with the means that were to be found on board the *Swash*. "It will take the brig until near morning," he said, "to beat up to the place where the wreck lies. Spike will wait for light to commence operations, and several hours will be necessary to moor the brig, and get out the anchors with which he will think it necessary to stay his masts. Then he will hook on, and he may partly raise the hull before night returns. More than this he can never do; and it would not surprise me were he merely to get everything ready for heaving on his purchases to-morrow, and suspend further proceedings until the next day, in preference to having so heavy a strain on his spars all night. He has not the force, however, to carry on such a duty to a very late hour; and you may count with perfect security, Captain Mull, on his being found alongside the wreck at sunrise the next day after to-morrow, in all probability with his anchors down, and fast to the wreck. By timing your own arrival well nothing will be easier than to get him fairly under

your guns; and once under your guns the brig must give up. When you chased her out of this very port, a few days since, you would have brought her up could you have kept her within range of those terrible shells ten minutes longer."

"You would then advise my not sailing from this place immediately?" said Mull.

"It will be quite time enough to get under way late in the afternoon, and then under short canvas. Ten hours will be ample time for this ship to beat up to that passage in, and it will be imprudeut to arrive too soon; nor do I suppose you will wish to be playing round the reef in the dark."

To the justice of all this Captain Mull assented; and the plan of proceedings was deliberately and intelligently formed. As it was necessary for Mulford to go in the ship in order to act as pilot, no one else on board knowing exactly where to find the wreck, the commander of the *Poughkeepsie* had the civility to offer the young couple the hospitalities of his own cabin, with one of his staterooms. This offer Harry gratefully accepted, it being understood that the ship would land them at Key West as soon as the contemplated duty was executed. Rose felt so much anxiety about her aunt that any other arrangement would scarcely have pacified her fears.

In consequence of these arrangements, the *Poughkeepsie* lay quietly at her anchors until near sunset. In the interval, her boats were out in all directions, parties of the officers visiting the islet where the powder had exploded and the islet where the tent erected for the use of the females was still standing. As for the lighthouse island, an order of Captain Mull's prevented it from being crowded in a manner unpleasant to Rose, as might otherwise have been the case. The few officers who did land there, however, appeared much struck with the ingenuous simplicity and beauty of the bride, and a manly interest in her welfare was created among them all, principally by means of the representations of the second lieutenant and the chaplain. About five o'clock she went off to the ship, accompanied by Harry, and was hoisted on board in the manner usually practiced by vessels of war which have no accommodation-ladder rigged. Rose was immediately installed in her stateroom, where she found every convenience necessary to a comfortable though small apartment.

It was quite late in the afternoon when the boatswain and his mate piped "All hands up anchor, ahoy!" Harry hastened into the stateroom for his charming bride, anxious to show her the movements of a vessel of war on such an occasion. Much as she had seen of the ocean and of a vessel within the last few weeks, Rose now found that she had yet a great deal to learn, and that a vessel of war had many points to distinguish her from a vessel engaged in commerce.

The *Poughkeepsie* was only a sloop of war, or a corvette, in construction, number of her guns, and rate; but she was a ship of the dimensions of an old-fashioned frigate, measuring about one thousand tons. The frigates of which we read half a century since, were seldom ever as large as this, though they were differently built, in having a regular gun-deck, or one armed deck that was entirely covered, with another above it; and on the quarter-deck and forecastle of the last of which were also batteries of lighter guns. To the contrary of all this, the *Poughkeepsie* had but one armed deck, and on that only twenty guns. These pieces, however, were of unusually heavy caliber, throwing thirty-pound shot, with the exception of the Paixhans or Columbiads, which throw shot of even twice that weight. The vessel had a crew of two hundred souls, all told; and she had the spars, anchors, and other equipments of a light frigate.

In another great particular did the *Poughkeepsie* differ from the corvette-built vessels that were so much in favor at the beginning of the century; a species of craft obtained from the French, who have taught the world so much in connection with naval science, and who, after building some of the best vessels that ever floated, have failed in knowing how to handle them, though not always in that. The *Poughkeepsie*, while she

had no spar or upper deck, properly speaking, had a poop and a topgallant-forecastle. Within the last were the cabins and other accommodations of the captain; an arrangement that was necessary for a craft of her construction, that carried so many officers, and so large a crew. Without it, sufficient space would not be had for the uses of the last. One gun of a side was in the main cabin, there being a very neat and amply spacious after-cabin between the staterooms, as is ordinarily the case in all vessels from the size of frigates up to that of three-deckers. It may be well to explain here, while on this subject of construction, that in naval parlance a ship is called a single-decked vessel, a *two*-decker, or a *three*-decker, not from the number of decks she actually possesses, but from the number of *gun*-decks that she has, or of those that are *fully* armed. Thus a frigate has four decks—the spar, gun, berth, and orlop (or haul-up) decks; but she is called a "single-decked ship," from the circumstance that only one of these four decks has a complete range of batteries. The two-decker has two of these fully armed decks, and three-deckers three; though, in fact, the two-decker has five, and three-decker six decks. Asking pardon for this little digression, which we trust will be found useful to a portion of our readers, we return to the narrative.

Harry conducted Rose to the poop of the *Poughkeepsie*, where she might enjoy the best view of the operation of getting so large a craft under way, man-of-war fashion. The details were mysteries of course, and Rose knew no more of the process by which the chain was brought to the capstan, by the intervention of what is called a messenger, than if she had not been present. She saw two hundred men distributed about the vessel, some at the capstan, some on the forecastle, some in the tops, and others in the waist, and she heard the order to "heave round." Then the shrill fife commenced the lively air of "The girl I left behind me," rather more from a habit in the fifer, than from any great regrets for the girls left at the Dry Tortugas, as was betrayed to Mulford by the smiles of the officers, and the glances they cast at Rose. As for the latter, she knew nothing of the air, and was quite unconscious of the sort of parody that the gentlemen of the quarter-deck fancied it conveyed on her own situation.

Rose was principally struck with the quiet that prevailed in the ship, Captain Mull being a silent man himself, and insisted on having a quiet vessel. The first lieutenant was not a noisy officer, and from these two, everybody else on board received their cues. A simple "All ready, sir," uttered by the first to the captain, in a common tone of voice, answered by a "Very well, sir, get your anchor," in the same tone, set everything in motion. "Stamp and go," soon followed, and taking the whole scene together, Rose felt a strange excitement come over her. There were the shrill, animating music of the fife; the stamping time of the men at the bars; the perceptible motion of the ship, as she drew ahead to her anchor, and now and then the call between Wallace, who stood between the knightheads, as commander-in-chief on the forecastle (the second lieutenant's station when the captain does not take the trumpet, as very rarely happens), and the "executive officer" aft "carrying on duty," all conspiring to produce this effect. At length—and it was but a moment or two from the time when the "stamp and go" commenced—Wallace called out, "A short staypeak, sir." "Heave and pull" followed, and the men left their bars.

The process of making sail succeeded. There was no "letting fall" a fore-topsail here, as on board a merchantman, but all the canvass dropped from the yards, into festoons, at the same instant. Then the three topsails were sheeted home and hoisted, all at once, and all in a single minute of time; the yards were counter-braced, and the capstan-bars were again manned. In two more minutes it was "heave and she's up and down." Then "heave and in sight," and "heave and pull again." The cat-fall was ready, and it was "hook on," when the fife seemed to turn its attention to another

subject as the men catted the anchor. 'Literally, all this was done in less time than we have taken to write it down in, and in very little more time than the reader has wasted in perusing what we have here written.

The *Poughkeepsie* was now "free of bottom," as it is called, with her anchor catted and fished, and her position maintained in the basin where she lay, by the counterbracing of her yards, and the counteracting force of the wind on her sails. It only remained to "fill away," by bracing her head-yards sharp up, when the vast mass overcame its inertia, and began to move through the water. All this was done, the jib and spanker were set. The two most beautiful things with which we are acquainted, are a graceful and high-bred woman entering or quitting a drawing-room, more particularly the last, and a man-of-war leaving her anchorage in a moderate breeze, and when not hurried for time. On the present occasion, Captain Mull was in no haste, and the ship passed out to windward of the light, as the *Swash* had done the previous night, under her three topsails, spanker and jib, with the light sails loose and flowing, and the courses hanging in the brails.

A great deal is said concerning the defective construction of the light cruisers of the navy, of late years, and complaints are made that they will not sail, as American crusiers ought to sail, and were wont to sail in old times. That there has been some ground for these complaints, we believe; though the evil has been greatly exaggerated, and some explanation may be given, we think, even in cases in which the strictures are not altogether without justification. The trim of a light sharp vessel is easily deranged; and officers, in their desire to command as much as possible, often get their vessels of this class too deep. They are, generally, for the sort of cruiser, over-sparred, overmanned, and over-provisioned; consequently, too deep. We recollect a case in which one of these delicate craft, a half-rigged brig, was much abused for "having lost her sailing." She did, indeed, lose her fore-yard, and, after that, she sailed like a witch, until she got a new one! If the facts were inquired into, in the spirit which ought to govern such inquiries, it would be found that even most of the much abused "ten sloops" proved to be better vessels than common. The *St. Louis*, the *Vincennes*, the *Concord*, the *Fairfield*, the *Boston*, and the *Falmouth*, are instances of what we mean. In behalf of the *Warren*, and the *Lexington*, we believe no discreet man was ever heard to utter one syllable, except as wholesome crafts. But the *Poughkeepsie* was a very different sort of vessel from any of the "ten sloops." She was every way a good ship, and, as Jack expressed it, was "a good goer." The most severe nautical critic could scarcely have found a fault in her, as she passed out between the islets, on the evening of the day mentioned, in the sort of undress we have described. The whole scene, indeed, was impressive, and of singular maritime characteristics.

The little islets scattered about—low, sandy, and untenanted—were the only land in sight; all else was the boundless waste of waters. The solitary light rose like an aquatic monument, as if purposely to give its character to the view. Captain Mull had caused its lamps to be trimmed and lighted, for the very reason that had induced Spike to do the same thing, and the dim star they presented was just struggling into existence as it might be, as the brilliance left by the setting sun was gradually diminished and finally disappeared. As for the ship, the hull appeared dark, glossy, and graceful, as is usual with a vessel of war. Her sails were in soft contrast to the color of the hull, and they offered the variety and divergence from straight lines which are thought necessary to perfect beauty. Those that were set, presented the sym metry in their trim, the flatness in their hoist, and the breadth that distinguish a man-of-war; while those that were loose, floated in the air in every wave and cloud-like swell that we so often see in light canvas that is released from the yards in a fresh breeze. The ship had an undress look from this circumstance, but it was

such an undress as denotes the man or woman of the world. This undress appearance was increased by the piping down of the hammocks, which left the nettings lose, and with a negligent but still knowing look about them.

When half a mile from the islets, the main-yard was braced aback, and the maintopsail was laid to the mast. As soon as the ship had lost her way, two or three boats, that had been towing astern, each with its boat-sitter, or keeper, in it, were hauled up alongside, or to the quarters, were "hooked on," and "run up" to the whistling of the call. All was done at once, and all was done in a couple of minutes. As soon as effected, the maintopsail was again filled, and away the ship glided.

Captain Mull was not in the habit of holding many consultations with his officers. If there be wisdom in a "multitude of counselors," he was of opinion it was not on board a man-of-war. Napoleon is reported to have said that *one* bad general was better than *two* good ones; meaning that one head to an army, though of inferior quality, is better than a hydra of Solomons or Cæsars. Captain Mull was much of the same way of thinking, seldom troubling his subordinates with anything but orders. He interfered very little with "working Willy," though he saw, effectually, that he did his duty. "The ship's gentleman" might enjoy his joke as much as he pleased, so long as he chose his time and place with discretion; but in the captain's presence joking was not tolerated, unless it were after dinner, at his own table, and in his own cabin. Even there it was not precisely such joking as took place daily, not to say hourly, in the midshipmen's messes.

In making up his mind as to the mode of proceeding on the present occasion, therefore, Captain Mull, while he had heard all that Mulford had to tell him, and had even encouraged Wallace to give his opinions, and made up his decision for himself. After learning all that Harry had to communicate, he made his own calculations as to time and distance, and quietly determined to carry whole sail on the ship for the next four hours. This he did as the wisest course of making sure of getting to windward while he could, and knowing that the vessel could be brought under short canvas at any moment when it might be deemed necessary. The light was a beacon to let him know his distance, with almost mathematical precision. It could be seen so many miles at sea, each mile being estimated by so many feet of elevation, and having taken that elevation, he was sure of his distance from the glittering object, so long as it could be seen from his own poop. It was also of use, by letting him know the range of the reef, though Captain Mull, unlike Spike, had determined to make one leg off to the northward and eastward until he had brought the light nearly to the horizon, and then to make another to the southward and eastward, believing that the last stretch would bring him to the reef, almost as far to windward as he desired to be. In furtherance of this plan, the sheets of the different sails were drawn home, as soon as the boats were in, and the *Poughkeepsie,* bending a little to the breeze, gallantly dashed the waves aside, as she went through and over them, at a rate of not less than ten good knots in the hour. As soon as all these arrangements were made, the watch went below, and from that time throughout the night, the ship offered nothing but the quiet manner in which ordinary duty is carried on in a well-regulated vessel of war at sea, between the hours of sun and sun. Leaving the good craft to pursue her way with speed and certainty, we must now return to the *Swash.*

Captain Spike had found the mooring of his brig a much more difficult task, on this occasion, than on that of his former attempt to raise the schooner. Then he had to lift the wreck bodily, and he knew that laying the *Swash* a few feet further ahead or astern, could be of no great moment, inasmuch as the moment the schooner was off the bottom, she would swing in perpendicularly to the purchases. But now one end of the schooner, her bows, was to remain fast, and it became of importance to be certain that the pur-

chases were so placed as to bring the least strain on the masts while they acted most directly on the after body of the vessel to be lifted. This point gave Spike more trouble than he had anticipated. Fully one-half of the remainder of the day, even after he had begun to heave up his purchases, was spent in rectifying mistakes in connection with this matter, and in getting up additional securities to his masts.

In one respect Spike had, from the first, made a good disposition. The masts of the brig raked materially, and by bringing the head of the *Swash* in the direction of the schooner, he converted this fact, which might otherwise have been of great disadvantage, into a circumstance that was favorable. In consequence of the brig's having been thus moored, the strain, which necessarily led forward, came nearly in line with the masts, and the latter were much better able to support it. Notwithstanding this advantage, however, it was found expedient to get up preventer-stays, and to give the spars all the additional support that could be conveniently bestowed. Hours were passed in making these preliminary, or, it might be better to say, secondary arrangements.

It was past five in the afternoon when the people of the *Swash* began to heave on their purchases as finally disposed. After much creaking, and the settling of straps and lashings into their places, it was found that everything stood, and the work went on. In ten minutes Spike found he had the weight of the schooner, as far as he should be obliged to sustain it at all, until the stern rose above the surface; and he felt reasonably secure of the doubloons. Further than this he did not intend to make any experiment on her, the Señor Montefalderon having abandoned all idea of recovering the vessel itself, now so much of the cargo was lost. The powder was mostly consumed, and that which remained in the hull must, by this time, be injured by dampness, if not ruined. So reasoned Don Juan, at least.

As the utmost care was necessary, the capstan and windlass were made to do their several duties with great caution. As inch by inch was gained, the extra supports of the masts were examined, and it was found that a much heavier strain now came on the masts than when the schooner was raised before. This was altogether owing to the direction in which it came, and to the fact that the anchor planted off abeam was not of as much use as on the former occasion, in consequence of its not lying so much in a straight line with the direction of the purchases. Spike began to have misgivings on account of his masts, and this so much the more because the wind appeared to haul a little further to the northward, and the weather to look unsettled. Should a swell roll into the bight of the reef where the brig lay, by raising the hull a little too rudely, there would be the imminent danger of at least springing, if not of absolutely carrying away both the principal spars. It was, therefore, necessary to resort to extraordinary precautions, in order to obviate this danger.

The captain was indebted to his boatswain, who was now in fact acting as his mate, for the suggestion of the plan next adopted. Two of the largest spars of the brig were got out, with their heads securely lashed to the links of the chain by which the wreck was suspended, one on each side of the schooner. Pig-iron and shot were lashed to the heels of these spars, which carried them to the bottom. As the spars were of greater length than was necessary to reach the rock, they necessarily lay at an inclination, which was lessened every inch the after-body of the wreck was raised, thus forming props to the hull of the schooner.

Spike was delighted with the success of this scheme, of which he was assured by a single experiment in heaving. After getting the spars well planted at their heels, he even ordered the men to slacken the purchases a little, and found that he could actually relieve the brig from the strain, by causing the wreck to be supported altogether by these shores. This was a vast relief from the cares of the approaching night, and indeed alone prevented the

necessity of the work's going on without interruption, or rest, until the end was obtained.

The people of the *Swash* were just assured of the comfortable fact related, as the *Poughkeepsie* was passing out from among the islets of the Dry Tortugas. They imagined themselves happy in having thus made a sufficient provision against the most formidable of all the dangers that beset them, at the very moment when the best-laid plan for their destruction was on the point of being executed. In this respect, they resembled millions of others of their fellows, who hang suspended over the vast abyss of eternity, totally unconscious of the irretrievable character of the fall that is so soon to occur. Spike, as has been just stated, was highly pleased with his own expedient, and he pointed it out with exultation to the Señor Montefalderon, as soon as it was completed.

"A nicer fit was never made by a Lunnun leg-maker, Don Wan," the captain cried, after going over the explanations connected with the shores; "there she stands, at an angle of fifty with two as good limbs under her as a body could wish. I could now cast off everything, and leave the wreck in what they call '*statu quo*,' which, I suppose, means on its pins, like a statue. The taffrail is not six inches below the surface of the water, and half an hour of heaving will bring the starn in sight."

"Your work seems ingeniously contrived to get up one extremity of the vessel, Don Esteban," returned the Mexican; but are you quite certain that the doubloons are in her?"

This question was put because the functionary of a government in which money was very apt to stick in passing from hand to hand was naturally suspicious, and he found it difficult to believe that Mulford, Jack Tier, and even Biddy, under all the circumstances, had not paid special attention to their own interests.

"The bag was placed in one of the transom-lockers before the schooner capsized," returned the captain, "as Jack Tier informs me; if so, it remains there still. Even the sharks will not touch gold, Don Wah."

"Would it not be well to call Jack, and hear his account of the matter once more, now we appear to be so near the Eldorado of our wishes?"

Spike assented, and Jack was summoned to the quarter-deck. The little fellow had scarce shown himself throughout the day, and he now made his appearance with a slow step, and reluctantly.

"You've made no mistake about them 'ere doubloons, I take it, Master Tier?" said Spike, in a very nautical sort of style of addressing an inferior. "You *know* them to be in one of the transom-lockers?"

Jack mounted on the breech of one of the guns, and looked over the bulwarks at the dispositions that had been made about the wreck. The taffrail of the schooner actually came in sight, when a little swell passed over it, leaving it for an instant in the trough. The steward thus caught a glimpse again of the craft on board which he had seen so much hazard, and he shook his head and seemed to be thinking of anything but the question which had just been put to him.

"Well, about that gold?" asked Spike, impatiently.

"The sight of that craft has brought other thoughts than gold into my mind, Captain Spike," answered Jack, gravely, "and it would be well for all us mariners, if we thought less of gold, and more of the dangers we run. For hours and hours did I stand over eternity, on the bottom of that schooner, Don Wan, holdin' my life, at as it might be, at the marcy of a few bubbles of air."

"What has all that to do with the gold? Have you deceived me about that locker, little rascal?"

"No, sir, I've *not* deceived you—no, Captain Spike, *no*. The bag is in the upper transom-locker, on the starboard side. There I put it with my own hands, and a good lift it was; and there you'll find it, if you'll cut through the quarter-deck at the spot I can p'int out to you."

This information seemed to give a renewed energy to all the native cupidity of

the captain, who called the men from their suppers and ordered them to commence heaving anew. The word was passed to the crew that "it was now for doubloons," and they went to the bars and handspikes, notwithstanding the sun had set, cheerfully and cheering.

All Spike's expedients admirably answered the intended purposes. The stern of the schooner rose gradually, and at each lift the heels of the shores dropped in more perpendicularly, carried by the weights attached to them, and the spars stood as firm props to secure all that was gained. In a quarter of an hour most of that part of the stern which was within five or six feet of the taffrail rose above the water, coming fairly in view.

Spike now shouted to the men to "pall!" then he directed the falls to be very gradually eased off in order to ascertain if the shores would still do their duty. The experiment was successful, and presently the wreck stood in its upright position, sustained entirely by the two spars. As the last were now nearly perpendicular, they were capable of bearing a very heavy weight, and Spike was so anxious to relieve his own brig from the strain she had been enduring that he ordered the lashings of the blocks to be loosened, trusting to his shores to do their duty. Against this confidence the boatswain ventured a remonstrance, but the gold was too near to allow the captain to listen or reply. The carpenter was ordered over on the wreck with his tools, while Spike, the Señor Montefalderon, and two men to row the boat and keep it steady, went in the yawl to watch the progress of the work. Jack Tier was ordered to stand in the chains and to point out as nearly as possible the place where the carpenter was to cut.

When all was ready, Spike gave the word, and the chips began to fly. By the use of the saw and the ax, a hole large enough to admit two or three men at a time, was soon made in the deck, and the sounding for the much coveted locker commenced. By this time, it was quite dark; and a lantern was passed down from the brig, in order to enable those who searched for the locker to see. Spike had breasted the yawl close up to the hole, where it was held by the men, while the captain himself passed the lantern and his own head into the opening to reconnoiter.

"Ay, it's all right!" cried the voice of the captain from within his cell-like cavity. "I can just see the lid of the locker that Jack means, and we shall soon have what we are a'ter. Carpenter, you may as well slip off your clothes at once, and go inside; I will point out to you the place where to find the locker. You're certain, Jack, it was the starboard locker?"

"Ay, ay, sir, the starboard locker, and no other."

The carpenter had soon got into the hole, as naked as when he was born. It was a gloomy-looking place for a man to descend into at that hour, the light from the lantern being no great matter, and half the time it was shaded by the manner in which Spike was compelled to hold it.

"Take care and get a good footing, carpenter," said the captain, in a kinder tone than common, "before you let go with your hands; but I suppose you can swim, as a matter of course?"

"No, sir, not a stroke—I never could make out in the water at all."

"Have the more care, then. Had I known as much, I would have sent another hand down; but mind your footing. More to the left, man—more to the left. That is the lid of the locker—your hand is on it; why do you not open it?"

"It is swelled by the water, sir, and will need a chisel, or some tool of that sort. Just call out to one of the men, sir, if you please, to pass me a chisel from my tool-chest. A good stout one will be the best."

This order was given, and, during the delay it caused, Spike encouraged the carpenter to be cool, and above all to mind his footing. His own eagerness to get at the gold was so great that he kept his head in at the hole, completely cutting off the man within from all communication with the outer world.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded Spike, a little sternly. "You shiver, and yet the water cannot be cold

in this latitude. No, my hand makes it just the right warmth to be pleasant."

"It's not the water, Captain Spike—I wish they would come with the chisel. Did you hear nothing, sir? I'm certain I did!"

"Hear!—what is there here to be heard, unless there may be some fish inside, thrashing about to get out of the vessel's hold?"

"I am sure I heard something like a groan, Captain Spike. I wish you would let me come out, sir, and I'll go for the chisel myself; them men will never find it."

"Stay where you are, coward! are you afraid of dead men standing against walls? Stay where you are. Ah, here is the chisel—now let us see what you can do with it."

"I am certain I heard another groan, Captain Spike. I cannot work, sir. I'm of no use here—*do* let me come out, sir. and send a hand down that can swim."

Spike uttered a terrible malediction on the miserable carpenter, one we do not care to repeat; then he cast the light of the lantern full in the man's face. The quivering flesh, the pallid face, and the whole countenance wrought up almost to a frenzy of terror, astonished, as well as alarmed him.

"What ails you, man?" said the captain in a voice of thunder. "Clap in the chisel, or I'll hurl you off into the water. There is nothing here, dead or alive, to harm ye!"

"The groan, sir—I hear it again. *Do* let me come out, Captain Spike."

Spike himself, this time, heard what even *he* took for a groan. It came from the depths of the vessel, apparently, and was sufficiently distinct and audible. Astonished, yet appalled, he thrust his shoulders into the aperture, as if to dare the demon that tormented him, and was met by the carpenter endeavoring to escape. In the struggle that ensued the lantern was dropped into the water, leaving the half-frenzied combatants contending in the dark. The groan was renewed, when the truth flashed on the minds of both.

"The shores! the shores!" exclaimed the carpenter from within.

"The shores!" repeated Spike, throwing himself back into the boat, and shouting to his men to "see all clear of the wreck!" The grating of one of the shores on the coral beneath was now heard plainer than ever, and the lower extremity slipped outward, not astern, as had been apprehended, letting the wreck slowly settle to the bottom again. One piercing shriek rose from the narrow cavity within; then the gurgling of water into the aperture was heard, when naught of the sound could be distinguished but the sudden and steady wash of the waves of the gulf over the rocks of the reef.

The impression made by this accident was most profound. A fatality appeared to attend the brig; and most of the men connected the sad occurrence of this night with the strange appearance of the previous evening. Even the Señor Montefalderon was disposed to abandon the doubloons, and he urged Spike to make the best of his way to Yucatan, to seek a friendly harbor. The captain wavered; but avarice was too strong a passion in him to be easily diverted from its object, and he refused to give up his purpose. As the wreck was entirely free from the brig when it went down for the third time, no injury was sustained by the last on this occasion. By renewing the lashings, everything would be ready to begin the work anew—and this Spike was resolved to attempt in the morning. The men were too much fatigued, and it was too dark to think of pushing matters any further that night; and it was very questionable whether they could have been got to work. Orders were consequently given for all hands to turn in, the captain, relieved by Don Juan and Jack Tier, having arranged to keep the watches for the night.

"This is a sad accident, Don Esteban," observed the Mexican, as they paced the quarter-deck together, just before the last turned in; "a sad accident. My miserable schooner seems to be deserted by its patron saint. Then your poor carpenter—"

"Yes, he was a good fellow enough with a saw or an adze," answered Spike, yawning. "But we get used to such things at sea. It's neither more nor less than a carpenter expended. Good night, Señor Don Wan; in the morning we will be at that gold ag'in."

CHAPTER XIV.

"She's in a scene of nature's war;
The winds and waters are at strife;
And both with her contending for
The brittle breath of human life."
—MISS GOULD.

SPIKE was sleeping hard in his berth, quite early on the following morning, before the return of light, indeed, when he suddenly started up, rubbed his eyes, and sprung upon deck like a man alarmed. He had heard or fancied he had heard a cry. A voice, once well known and listened to, seemed to call him in the very portals of his ear. At first he had listened to its words in wonder, entranced like the bird by the snake, the tones recalling scenes and persons that had once possessed a strong control over his rude feelings. Presently the voice became harsher in its utterance, and it said:

"Stephen Spike, awake! The hour is getting late, and you have enemies nearer to you than you imagine. Awake, Stephen, awake!"

When the captain was on his feet, and had plunged his head into a basin of water that stood ready for him in the stateroom, he could not have told, for his life, whether he had been dreaming or waking, whether what he had heard was the result of a feverish imagination, or of the laws of nature. The call haunted him all that morning, or until events of importance so pressed upon him as to draw his undivided attention to them alone.

It was not yet day. The men were still in heavy sleep, lying about the decks, for they avoided the small and crowded forecastle in that warm climate, and the night was, apparently, at its deepest hour. Spike walked forward to look for the man charged with the anchor-watch. It proved to be Jack Tier, who was standing near the galley, his arms folded as usual, apparently watching the few signs of approaching day that were beginning to be apparent in the western sky. The captain was in none of the best of humors with the steward's assistant; but Jack had unaccountably got an ascendency over his commander, which it was certainly very unusual for any subordinate in the *Swash* to obtain. Spike had deferred more to Mulford than to any mate he had ever before employed; but this was the deference due to superior information, manners, and origin.

It was commonplace, if not vulgar; whereas, the ascendency obtained by little Jack Tier was, even to its subject, entirely inexplicable. He was unwilling to admit it to himself in the most secret manner, though he had begun to feel it on all occasions which brought them in contact, and to submit to it as a thing not to be averted.

"Jack Tier," demanded the captain, now that he had found himself once more alone with the other, desirous of obtaining his opinion on a point that harassed him, though he knew not why; "Jack Tier, answer me one thing. Do you believe that we saw the form of a dead or of a living man at the foot of the lighthouse?"

"The dead are never seen leaning against walls in that manner, Stephen Spike," answered Jack, coolly, not even taking the trouble to uncoil his arms. "What you saw was a living man; and you would do well to be on your guard against him. Harry Mulford is not your friend—and there is reason for it."

"Harry Mulford, and living! How can that be, Jack? You know the port in which he chose to run."

"I know the rock on which you chose to abandon him, Captain Spike."

"If so, how could he be living and at the Dry Tortugas? The thing is impossible!"

"The thing is so. You saw Harry Mulford, living and well, and ready to hunt you to the gallows. Beware of him, then; and beware of his handsome wife!"

"Wife! the fellow has no wife—he has always professed to be a single man!"

"The man is married—and I bid you beware of his handsome wife. She, too, will be a witness ag'in you."

"This will be news, then, for Rose Budd. I shall delight in telling it to *her* at least."

"'Twill be *no* news to Rose Budd. She was present at the wedding, and will not be taken by surprise. Rose loves Harry too well to let him marry, and she not present at the wedding."

"Jack, you talk strangely! What is the meaning of all this? I am the captain of this craft and will not be trifled with—tell me at once your meaning, fellow!"

"My meaning is simple enough, and easily told. Rose Budd is the wife of Harry Mulford."

"You're dreaming, fellow, or are wishing to trifle with me?"

"It may be a dream, but it is one that will turn out to be true. If they have found the *Poughkeepsie* sloop-of-war, as I make no doubt they have by this time, Mulford and Rose are man and wife."

"Fool! you know not what you say! Rose is, at this moment, in her berth, sick at heart on account of the young gentleman who preferred to live on the Florida Reef rather than to sail in the *Molly!*"

"Rose is *not* in her berth, sick or well; neither is she on board this brig at all. She went off in the lighthouse boat to deliver her lover from the naked rock—and well did she succeed in so doing. God was of her side, Stephen Spike; and a body seldom fails with such a friend to support one."

Spike was astounded at these words, and not less so at the cool and confident manner with which they were pronounced. Jack spoke in a certain dogmatical, oracular manner, it is true, one that might have lessened his authority with a person over whom he had less influence; but this in no degree diminished its effect on Spike. On the contrary, it even disposed the captain to yield an implicit faith to what he heard, and also much the more because the facts he was told appeared of themselves to be nearly impossible. It was half a minute before he had sufficiently recovered from his surprise to continue the discourse.

"The lighthouse boat!" Spike then slowly repeated. "Why, fellow, you told me the lighthouse boat went adrift from your own hands!"

"So it did," answered Jack, coolly, "since I cast off the painter—and what is more, went in it."

"You! This is impossible. You are telling me a fabricated lie. If you had gone away in that boat, how could you now be here? No, no—it is a miserable lie, and Rose is below!"

"Go and look into her stateroom, and satisfy yourself with your own eyes."

Spike did as was suggested. He went below, took a lamp that was always suspended, lighted, in the main cabin, and, without ceremony, proceeded to Rose's stateroom, where he soon found that the bird had really flown. A direful execration followed this discovery, one so loud as to awaken Mrs. Budd and Biddy. Determined not to do things by halves, he broke open the door of the widow's stateroom, and ascertained that the person he sought was not there. A fierce explosion of oaths and denunciations followed, which produced an answer in the customary screams. In the midst of this violent scene, however, questions were put, and answers obtained, that not only served to let the captain know that Jack had told him nothing but truth, but to put an end to everything like amicable relations between himself and the relict of his old commander. Until this explosion, appearances had been observed between them; but, from that moment, there must necessarily be an end of all profession of even civility. Spike was never particularly refined in his intercourse with females, but he now threw aside even its pretension. His rage was so great, that he totally forgot his manhood, and lavished on both Mrs. Budd and Biddy, epithets that were altogether inexcusable, and many of which it will not do to repeat. Weak and silly as was the widow, she was not without spirit; and on this occasion she was indisposed to submit to all this unmerited abuse in silence. Biddy, as usual, took her cue from her mistress; and between the two, their part of the

wordy conflict was kept up with a very respectable degree of animation.

"I know you—I know you, now!" screamed the widow, at the top of her voice; "and you can no longer deceive me, unworthy son of Neptune as you are! You are unfit to be a lubber, and would be log-booked for an or'nary by every gentleman on board ship. You, a full-jiggered seaman! No, you are not even half-jiggered, sir; and I tell you so to your face."

"Yes, and it isn't *half* that might be tould the likes of yees!" put in Biddy, as her mistress stopped to breathe. "And it's Miss Rose you'd have for a wife, when Biddy Noon would be too good for ye! We knows ye, and all about ye, and can give yer history as complate from the day ye was born down to the prisent moment, and not find a good word to say in yer favor in all that time—and a precious time it is, too, for a gentleman that would marry pretthy, *young* Miss Rose! Och! I scorn to look at ye, yer so ugly!"

"And trying to persuade me you were a friend of my poor, dear Mr. Budd, whose shoe you are unworthy to touch, and who had the heart and soul for the noble profession you disgrace," cut in the widow, the moment Biddy gave her a chance, by pausing to make a wry face as she pronounced the word "ugly." "I now believe you capasided them poor Mexicans, in order to get their money; and the moment we cast anchor in a road-side I'll go ashore, and complain of you for murder, I will."

"Do, missus dear, and I'll be your bail, will I, and swear to all that happened, and more too. Och! yer a wretch, to wish to be the husband of Miss Rose, and she so young and pretthy, and you so ould and ugly."

"Come away—come away, Stephen Spike, and do not stand wrangling with women, when you and your brig, and all that belongs to you, are in danger," called out Jack Tier from the companion-way. "Day is come; and what is much worse for you, your most dangerous enemy is coming with it."

Spike was almost livid with rage, and ready to burst out in awful maledictions; but at this summons he sprung to the ladder, and was on deck in a monent. At first, he felt a strong disposition to wreak his vengeance on Tier; but, fortunately for the latter, as the captain's foot touched the quarter-deck, his eye fell on the *Poughkeepsie*, then within half a league of the *Swash*, standing in toward the reef, though fully half a mile to leeward. This specter drove all other subjects from his mind, leaving the captain of the *Swash* in the only character in which he could be said to be respectable, in that of a seaman. Almost instinctively he called all hands; then gave one brief minute to a survey of his situation.

It was, indeed, time for the *Swash* to be moving. There she lay, with three anchors down, including that of the schooner, all she had, in fact, with the exception of her best bower, and one kedge, with the purchases aloft, in readiness for hooking on to the wreck, and all the extra securities up that had been given to the masts. As for the sloop-of-war, she was under the very same canvas as that with which she had come out from the Dry Tortugas, or her three topsails, spanker, and jib; but most of her other sails were loose, even to her royals and flying-jibs; though closely gathered into their spars by means of the running gear. In a word, every sailor would know, at a glance, that the ship was merely waiting for the proper moment to spread her wings, when she would be flying through the water at the top of her speed. The weather looked dirty, and the wind was gradually increasing, threatening to blow heavily as the day advanced.

"Unshackle, unshackle!" shouted Spike to the boatswain, who was the first man that appeared on deck. "The bloody sloop-of-war is upon us, and there is not a moment to lose. We must get the brig clear of the ground in the shortest way we can, and abandon everything. Unshackle, and cast off, for'ard and aft, men."

A few minutes of almost desperate exertion succeeded. No men work like sailors, when the last are in a hurry, their

efforts being directed to counteracting the squalls, and avoiding emergencies of the most pressing character. Thus it was now with the crew of the *Swash*. The clanking of chains lasted but a minute, when the parts attached to the anchors were thrust through the hawse-holes, or were dropped into the water from other parts of the brig. This at once released the vessel, though a great deal remained to be done to clear her for working, and to put her in the best trim.

"Away with this out-hauler!" again shouted Spike, casting loose the main-brails as he did so; "loose the jibs!"

All went on at once, and the *Swash* moved away from the grave of the poor carpenter with the ease and facility of motion that marked all her evolutions. Then the top-sail was let fall, and presently all the upper squaresails were sheeted home, and hoisted, and the fore-tack was hauled aboard. The *Molly* was soon alive, and jumping into the seas that met her with more power than was common, as she drew out from under the shelter of the reef into rough water. From the time when Spike gave his first order, to that when all his canvas was spread, was just seven minutes.

The *Poughkeepsie*, with her vastly superior crew, was not idle the while. Although the watch below was not disturbed, she tacked beautifully, and stood off the reef, in a line parallel to the course of the brig, and distant from her about half a mile. Then sail was made, her tacks having been boarded in stays. Spike knew the play of his craft was short legs, for she was so nimble in her movements that he believed she could go about in half the time that would be required for a vessel of the *Poughkeepsie's* length. "Ready about," was his cry, therefore, when less than a mile from the reef—"ready about, and let her go round." Round the *Molly* did go, like a top, being full on the other tack in just fifty-six seconds. The movement of the corvette was more stately, and somewhat more deliberate. Still, she stayed beautifully, and both Spike and the boatswain shook their heads, as they saw her coming into the wind with her sails all lifting and the sheets flowing.

"That fellow will fore-reach a cable's length before he gets about!" exclaimed Spike. "He will prove too much for us at this sport! Keep her away, my man—keep the brig away for the passage. We must run through the reef, instead of trusting ourselves to our heels in open water."

The brig was kept away accordingly, and sheets were eased off, and braces just touched to meet the new line of sailing. As the wind stood, it was possible to lay through the passage on an easy bowline, though the breeze, which was getting to be fresher than Spike wished it to be, promised to haul more to the southward of east, as the day advanced. Nevertheless, this was the *Swash's* best point of sailing, and all on board of her had strong hopes of her being too much for her pursuer, could she maintain it. Until this feeling began to diffuse itself in the brig, not a countenance was to be seen on her decks that did not betray intense anxiety; but now something like grim smiles passed among the crew, as their craft seemed rather to fly than force her way through the water, toward the entrance of the passage so often adverted to in this narrative.

On the other hand, the *Poughkeepsie* was admirably sailed and handled. Everybody was on deck, and the first lieutenant had taken the trumpet. Captain Mull was a man of method, and a thorough man-of-war's man. Whatever he did was done according to rule, and with great system. Just as the *Swash* was about to enter the passage, the drum of the *Poughkeepsie* beat to quarters. No sooner were the men mustered, in the leeward, or the starboard batteries, than orders were sent to cast loose the guns, and to get them ready for service. Owing to the more leeward position of his vessel, and to the fact that she always head-reached so much in stays, Captain Mull knew that she would not lose much by luffing into the wind, or by making half-boards, while he might gain everything by one well-directed shot.

The strife commenced by the sloop-of-

war firing her weather bow-gun, single-shotted, at the *Swash*. No damage was done, though the fore-yard of the brig had a very narrow escape. This experiment was repeated three times, without even a rope-yarn being carried away, though the gun was pointed by Wallace himself, and well pointed, too. But it is possible for a shot to come very near its object and do no injury. Such was the fact on this occasion, though the "ship's gentleman" was a good deal mortified by the result. Men look so much at success as the test of merit, that few pause to inquire into the reasons of failures, though it frequently happens, that adventures prosper by means of their very blunders. Captain Mull now determined on a half-board, for his ship was more to leeward than he desired. Directions were given to the officers in the batteries to be deliberate, and the helm was put down. As the ship shot into the wind, each gun was fired as it could be brought to bear, until the last of them all was discharged. Then the course of the vessel was changed, the helm being righted before the ship had lost her way, and the sloop-of-war fell off again to her course.

All this was done in such a short period of time, as scarcely to cause the *Poughkeepsie* to lose anything, while it did the *Swash* the most serious injury. The guns had been directed at the brig's spars and sails, Captain Mull desiring no more than to capture his chase, and the destruction they produced aloft was such as to induce Spike and his men, at first, to imagine that the whole hamper above their heads was about to come clattering down on deck. One shot carried away all the weather foretopmast rigging of the brig, and would no doubt have brought about the loss of the mast, if another, that almost instantly succeeded, had not cut the spar itself in two, bringing down, as a matter of course, everything above it. Nearly half of the mainmast was gouged out of that spar, and the gaff was taken fairly out of its jaws. The foreyard was cut in the slings, and various important ropes were carried away in different parts of the vessel.

Flight, under such circumstances, was impossible, unless some extraordinary external assistance was to be obtained. This Spike saw at once, and he had recourse to the only expedient that remained which might possibly yet save him. The guns were still belching forth their smoke and flames, when he shouted out the order to put the helm hard up. The width of the passage in which the vessels were was not so great but that he might hope to pass across it, and to enter a channel among the rocks, which was favorably placed for such a purpose, ere the sloop-of-war could overtake him. Whither that channel led, what water it possessed, or whether it were not a shallow *cul-de-sac*, were all facts of which Spike was ignorant. The circumstances, however, would not admit of an alternative.

Happily for the execution of Spike's present design, nothing from aloft had fallen into the water to impede the brig's way. Forward, in particular, she seemed all wreck; her foreyard having come down altogether, so as to encumber the forecastle, while her topmast, with its dependent spars and gear, was suspended but a short distance above. Still nothing had gone over the side so as actually to touch the water, and the craft obeyed her helm as usual. Away she went, then, for the lateral opening in the reef just mentioned, driven ahead by the pressure of a strong breeze on her sails, which still offered large surfaces to the wind, at a rapid rate. Instead of keeping away to follow, the *Poughkeepsie* maintained her luff, and just as the *Swash* entered the unknown passage, into which she was blindly plunging, the sloop-of-war was about a quarter of a mile to windward, and standing directly across her stern. Nothing would have been easier now than for Captain Mull to destroy his chase; but humanity prevented his firing. He knew that her career must be short, and he fully expected to see her anchor; when it would be easy for him to take possession with his boats. With this expectation, indeed, he shortened sail, furling top-gallant sails, and hauling up his courses. By this time the wind had so

much freshened as to induce him to think of putting in a reef and the step now taken had a double object in view.

To the surprise of all on board the man-of-war, the brig continued on, until she was fully a mile distant, finding her way deeper and deeper among the mazes of the reef without meeting with any impediment. This fact induced Captain Mull to order his Paixhans to throw their shells beyond her, by way of a hint to anchor. While the guns were getting ready, Spike stood on boldly, knowing it was neck or nothing, and beginning to feel a faint revival of hope, as he found himself getting further and further from his pursuers, and the rocks not fetching him up. Even the men, who had begun to murmur at what seemed to them to be risking too much, partook, in a slight degree, of the same feeling, and began to execute the order they had received, to try to get the launch into the water, with some appearance of an intention to succeed. Previously, the work could scarcely be said to go on at all; but two or three of the older seamen now bestirred themselves, and suggestions were made and attended to that promised results. But is was no easy thing to get the launch out of a half-rigged brig, that had lost her foreyard, and which carried nothing square abaft. A derrick was used in common to lift the stern of the boat; but a derrick would now be useless aft, without an assistant forward.

While these things were in discussion under the superintendence of the boatswain, and Spike was standing between the knightheads, conning the craft, the sloop-of-war let fly the first of her hollow shot. Down came the hurtling mass upon the *Swash*, keeping every head elevated and all eyes looking for the dark object as it went booming through the air above their heads. The shot passed fully a mile to leeward, where it exploded. This great range had been given to the first shot with a view to admonish the captain how long he must continue under the guns of the ship and as advice to come to. The second gun followed immediately. Its shot was seen to ricochet directly in a line with the brig, making leaps of about half a mile in length. It struck the water about fifty yards astern of the vessel, bounded directly over her decks, passing through the mainsail and some of the fallen hamper forward, and exploded about a hundred yards ahead. As usually happens with such projectiles, most of the fragments were either scattered laterally or went on, impelled by the original momentum.

The effect of this last gun on the crew of the *Swash* was instantaneous and deep. The faint gleamings of hope vanished at once, and a lively consciousness of the desperate nature of their condition succeeded in every mind. The launch was forgotten, and, after conferring together for a moment, the men went in a body, with the boatswain at their head, to the forecastle, and offered a remonstrance to their commander, on the subject of holding out any longer under circumstances so very hazardous, and which menaced their lives in so many different ways. Spike listened to them with eyes that fairly glared with fury. He ordered them back to their duty in a voice of thunder, tapping the breast of his jacket, where he was known to carry revolvers, with a significance that could convey but one meaning.

It is wonderful the ascendency that men sometimes obtain over their fellows, by means of character, the habits of command and obedience, and intimidation. Spike was a stern disciplinarian, relying on that and ample pay for the unlimited control he often found it necessary to exercise over his crew. On the present occasion his people were profoundly alarmed, but habitual deference and submission to their leader counteracted the feeling, and held them in suspense. They were fully aware of the nature of the positions they occupied in a legal sense, and were deeply reluctant to increase the appearances of crime, but most of them had been extricated from so many grave difficulties in former instances, by the coolness, nerve, and readiness of the captain, that a latent ray of hope was perhaps dimly shining in the rude breast of every old sea-dog

among them. As a consequence of these several causes they abandoned their remonstrance, for the moment at least, and made a show of returning to their duty—though it was in a sullen and moody manner.

It was easier, however, to make a show of hoisting out the launch, than to effect the object. This was soon made apparent, on trial, and Spike himself gave the matter up. He ordered the yawl to be lowered, got alongside, and to be prepared for the reception of the crew, by putting into it a small provision of food and water. All this time the brig was rushing madly to leeward, among rocks and breakers, without any other guide than that which the visible dangers afforded. Spike knew no more where he was going than the meanest man in his vessel. His sole aim was to get away from his pursuers, and to save his neck from the rope. He magnified the danger of punishment that he really ran, for he best knew the extent and nature of his crimes, of which the few that have been laid before the reader, while they might have been among the most prominent, as viewed through the statutes and international law, were far from the gravest he had committed in the eyes of morals.

About this time the Señor Montefelderon went forward to confer with Spike. The calmness of this gentleman's demeanor, the simplicity and coolness of his movements, denoted a conscience that saw no particular ground for alarm. He wished to escape captivity, that he might continue to serve his country, but no other apprehension troubled him.

"Do you intend to trust yourself in the yawl, Don Esteban?" demanded the Mexican, quietly. "If so, is she not too small to contain so many as we shall make altogether?"

Spike's answer was given in a low voice; and it evidently came from a very husky throat.

"Speak lower, Don Wan," he said. "The boat would be greatly overloaded with all hands in it, especially among the breakers, and blowing as it does; but we may leave some of the party behind."

"The brig *must* go on the rocks, sooner or later, Don Esteban; when she does, she will go to pieces in an hour."

"I expect to hear her strike every minute, Señor; the moment she does, we must be off. I have had my eye on that ship for some time, expecting to see her lower her cutters and gigs to board us. *You* will not be out of the way, Don Wan; but there is no need of being talkative on the subject of our escape."

Spike now turned his back on the Mexican, looking anxiously ahead, with the desire to get as far into the reef as possible with his brig, which he conned with great skill and coolness. The Señor Montefalderon left him. With the chivalry and consideration of a man and a gentleman, he went in quest of Mrs. Budd and Biddy. A hint sufficed for them, and, gathering together a few necessaries, they were in the yawl in the next three minutes. This movement was unseen by Spike, or he might have prevented it. His eyes were now riveted on the channel ahead. It had been fully his original intention to make off in the boat the instant the brig struck, abandoning not only Don Juan, with Mrs. Budd and Biddy, to their fates, but most of the crew. A private order had been given to the boatswain, and three of the ablest-bodied among the seamen, each and all of whom kept the secret with religious fidelity, as it was believed their own personal safety might be connected with the success of this plan.

Nothing is so contagious as alarm. It requires not only great natural steadiness of nerve, but much acquired firmness, to remain unmoved when sudden terror has seized on the minds of those around us. Habitual respect had prevented the crew from interfering with the movements of the Mexican, who not only descended into the boat with his female companions uninterrupted, but also took with him the little bag of doubloons which fell to his share from the first raising of the schooner. Josh and Jack Tier assisted in getting Mrs. Budd and Biddy over the side, and both took their own places in the yawl as soon as this pious duty was discharged.

This served as a hint to others near at hand; and man after man left his work to steal into the yawl, until every living being had disappeared from the deck of the *Swash*, Spike himself excepted. The man at the wheel had been the last to desert his post, nor would he have done so then, but for a signal from the boatswain, with whom he was a favorite.

It is certain there was a secret desire among the people of the *Swash*, who were now crowded into a boat not large enough to contain more than half their number with safety, to push off from the brig's side, and abandon her commander and owner to his fate. All had passed so soon, however, and events succeeded each other with so much rapidity, that little time was given for consultation. Habit kept them in their places, though the appearances around them were strong motives for taking care of themselves.

Notwithstanding the time necessary to relate the foregoing events, a quarter of an hour had not elapsed from the moment when the *Swash* entered this unknown channel among the rocks ere she struck. No sooner was her helm deserted, than she broached-to, and Spike was in the act of denouncing the steerage, ignorant of its cause, when the brig was thrown broadside-to, on a sharp, angular bed of rocks. It was fortunate for the boat, and all in it, that it was brought to leeward by the broaching-to of the vessel, and that the water was still sufficiently deep around them to prevent the waves from breaking. Breakers there were, however, in thousands, on every side; and the seamen understood that their situation was almost desperately perilous, without shipwreck coming to increase the danger.

The storm itself was scarcely more noisy and boisterous than was Spike when he ascertained the manner in which his people had behaved. At first he believed it was their plan to abandon him to his fate; but, on rushing to the lee-gangway, Don Juan Montefalderon assured him that no such intention existed, and that he would not allow the boat to be cast off until the captain was received on board. This brief respite gave Spike a moment to care for his portion of the doubloons: and he rushed to his stateroom to secure them, together with his quadrant.

The grinding of the brig's bottom on the coral announced a speedy breaking up of the craft, while her commander was thus employed. So violent were some of the shocks with which she came down on the hard bed in which she was now cradled, that Spike expected to see her burst asunder, while he was yet on her decks. The cracking of timbers told him that all was over with the *Swash*, nor had he got back as far as the gangway with his prize, before he saw plainly that the vessel had broken her back, as it is termed, and that her plank-sheer was opening in a way that threatened to permit a separation of the craft in two sections, one forward and the other aft. Notwithstanding all these portentous proofs that the minutes of the *Molly* were numbered, and the danger that existed of his being abandoned by his crew, Spike paused a moment, ere he went over the vessel's side, to take a hasty survey of the reef. His object was to get a general idea of the position of the breakers, with a view to avoid them. As much of the interest of that which is to succeed is connected with these particular dangers, it may be well to explain their character, along with a few other points of a similar bearing.

The brig had gone ashore fully two miles within the passage she had entered, and which, indeed, terminated at the very spot where she had struck. The *Poughkeepsie* was standing off and on, in the main channel, with her boats in the water, evidently preparing to carry the brig in that mode. As for the breakers, they whitened the surface of the ocean in all directions around the wreck, but two, far as the eye could reach. The passage in which the *Poughkeepsie* was standing to and fro was clear of them, of course, and about a mile and half to the northward, Spike saw that he should be in open water, or altogether on the northern side of the reef, could he only get there. The gravest dangers would exist in the passage, which led among breakers on all sides, and very possibly among rocks so near the surface

as absolutely to obstruct the way. In one sense, however, the breakers were useful. By avoiding them as much as possible, and by keeping in the unbroken water, the boat would be running in the channels of the reef, and consequently would be the safer. The result of the survey, short as it was, and it did not last a minute, was to give Spike something like a plan; and when he went over the side, and got into the boat, it was with a determination to work his way out of the reef to its northern edge, as soon as possible, and then to skirt it as near as he could, in his flight toward the Dry Tortugas.

CHAPTER XV.

"The screams of rage, the groan, the strife,
The blow, the grasp, the horrid cry,
The panting, throttled prayer for life,
The dying's heaving sigh,
The murderer's curse, the dead man's fixed, still glare,
And fear's and death's cold sweat—they all are there."
—MATTHEW LEE.

IT was high time that Captain Spike should arrive when his foot touched the bottom of the yawl. The men were getting impatient and anxious to the last degree, and the power of Señor Montefalderon to control them was lessening each instant. They heard the rending of timber, and the grinding on the coral, even more distinctly than the captain himself, and feared that the brig would break up while they lay alongside of her, and crush them amid the ruins. Then the spray of the seas that broke over the weather-side of the brig fell like rain upon them, and everybody in the boat was already as wet as if exposed to a violent shower. It was well, therefore, for Spike that he descended into the boat as he did, for another minute's delay might have brought about his own destruction.

Spike felt a chill at his heart when he looked about him and saw the condition of the yawl. So crowded were the sternsheets into which he had descended, that it was with difficulty he found room to place his feet; it being his intention to steer, Jack was ordered to get into the eyes of the boat, in order to give him a seat. The thwarts were crowded, and three or four of the people had placed themselves in the very bottom of the little craft, in order to be as much as possible out of the way as well as in readiness to bail out water. So seriously, indeed, were all the seamen impressed with the gravity of this last duty, that nearly every man had taken with him some vessel fit for such a purpose. Rowing was entirely out of the question, there being no space for the movement of the arms. The yawl was too low in the water, moreover, for such an operation in so heavy a sea. In all, eighteen persons were squeezed into a little craft that would have been sufficiently loaded, for moderate weather at sea, with its four oarsmen and as many sitters in the stern-sheets, with, perhaps, one in the eyes to bring her more on an even keel. In other words, she had twice the weight in her, in living freight, that it would have been thought prudent to receive in so small a craft, in an ordinary time, in or out of a port. In addition to the human beings enumerated, there was a good deal of baggage, nearly every individual having had the forethought to provide a few clothes for a change. The food and water did not amount to much, no more having been provided than enough for the purposes of the captain, together with the four men with whom it had been his intention to abandon the brig. The effect of all this cargo was to bring the yawl quite low in the water; and every sea-faring man in her had the greatest apprehensions about her being able to float at all when she got out from under the lee of the *Swash*, or into the troubled water. Try it she must, however, and Spike, in a reluctant and hesitating manner, gave the final order to "Shove off!"

The yawl carried a lug, as is usually the case with boats at sea, and the first blast of the breeze upon it satisfied Spike that his present enterprise was one of the most dangerous of any in which he had ever been engaged. The puffs of wind were quite as much as the boat would bear, but this he did not mind, as he was

running off before it, and there was little danger of the yawl capsizing with such a weight in her. It was also an advantage to have swift way on, to prevent the combing waves from shooting into the boat, though the wind itself scarce outstrips the send of the sea in a swift blow. As the yawl cleared the brig and began to feel the united power of the wind and waves, the following short dialogue occurred between the boatswain and Spike.

"I dare not keep my eyes off the breakers ahead," the captain commenced, "and must trust to you Strand, to report what is going on among the men-of-war's men. What is the ship about?"

"Reefing her topsails just now, sir. All three are on the caps, and the vessel is laying-to, in a manner."

"And her boats?"

"I see none, sir — ay, ay, there they come from alongside of her in a little fleet! There are four of them, sir, and all are coming down before the wind, wing and wing, carrying their lugs reefed."

"Ours ought to be reefed by rights, too, but we dare not stop to do it; and these infernal combing seas seem ready to glance aboard us with all the way we can gather. Stand by to bail, men; we must pass through a strip of white water —there is no help for it. God send that we go clear of the rocks?"

All this was fearfully true. The adventurers were not yet more than a cable's length from the brig, and they found themselves so completely environed with the breakers as to be compelled to go through them. No man in his senses would ever have come into such a place at all, except in the most unavoidable circumstances; and it was with a species of despair that the seamen of the yawl now saw their little craft go plunging into the foam.

But Spike neglected no precaution that experience or skill could suggest. He had chosen his spot with coolness and judgment. As the boat rose on the seas he looked eagerly ahead, and by giving it a timely sheer, he hit a sort of channel, where there was sufficient water to carry them clear of the rock, and where the breakers were less dangerous than in shoaler places. The passage lasted a minute; and so serious was it, scarce an individual breathed until it effected. No human skill could prevent the water from combing in over the gunwales; and when the danger was past the yawl was a third filled with water. There was no time or place to pause. All on the little craft was dragged almost gunwale to, the breeze coming again on the lug in puffs that threatened to take the mast out of her. All hands were bailing; and even Biddy used her hands to aid in throwing out the water.

"This is no time to hesitate, men," said Spike, sternly. "Everything must go overboard but the food and water. Away with them at once, and with a will."

It was a proof how completely all hands were alarmed by this, the first experiment in the breakers, that not a man stayed his hand a single moment, but each threw into the sea without an instant of hesitation every article he had brought with him and had hoped to save. Biddy parted with the carpet-bag, and Señor Montefalderon, feeling the importance of example, committed to the deep a small writing desk that he had placed on his knees. The doubloons alone remained, safe in a little locker where Spike had deposited them along with his own.

"What news astern, boatswain?" demanded the captain, as soon as this imminent danger was passed, absolutely afraid to turn his eyes off the dangers ahead for a single instant. "How come on the man-of-war's men?"

"They are running down in a body toward the wreck, though one of their boats does seem to be sheering out of the line, as if getting into our wake. It is hard to say, sir, for they are still a good bit to windward of the wreck."

"And the *Molly*, Strand?"

"Why, sir, the *Molly* seems to be breaking up fast; as well as I can see, she has broke in two just abaft the forechains, and cannot hold together in any shape at all many minutes longer."

This information drew a deep groan from Spike, and the eye of every seaman

Spike had breasted the yawl close up to the hole where it was held by the men while the captain himself passed the lantern and his own head into the opening to reconnoiter.—*Jack Tier.*

in the boat was turned in melancholy on the object they were so fast leaving behind them. The yawl could not be said to be sailing very rapidly, considering the power of the wind, which was a little gale, for she was much too deep for that, but she left the wreck so fast as already to render objects on board her indistinct. Everybody saw that, like an over-burdened steed, she had more to get along with than she could well bear; and, dependent as seamen usually are on the judgment and orders of their superiors, even in the direst emergencies, the least experienced man in her saw that their chances of final escape from drowning were of the most doubtful nature. The men looked at each other in a way to express their feelings; and the moment seemed favorable to Spike to confer with his confidential sea-dogs in private; but more white water was also ahead, and it was necessary to pass through it since no opening was visible by which to avoid it. He deferred his purpose, consequently, until this danger was escaped.

On this occasion Spike saw but little opportunity to select a place to get through the breakers, though the spot, as a whole, was not of the most dangerous kind. The reader will understand that the preservation of the boat at all, in white water, was owing to the circumstance that the rocks all around it lay so near the surface of the sea as to prevent the possibility of agitating the element very seriously, and to the fact that she was near the lee-side of the reef. Had the breakers been of the magnitude of those which are seen where the deep rolling billows of the ocean first meet the weatherside of the shoals or rocks, a craft of that size, and so loaded, could not possibly have passed the first line of white water without filling. As it was, however, the breakers she had to contend with were sufficiently formidable, and they brought with them the certainty that the boat was in imminent danger of striking the bottom at any moment. Places like those in which Mulford had waded on the reef, while it was calm, would now have proved fatal to the strongest frame, since human powers were insufficient long to withstand the force of such waves as did glance over even these shallows.

"Look out!" cried Spike, as the boat again plunged in among the white water. "Keep bailing, men—keep bailing."

The men did bail, and the danger was over almost as soon as encountered. Something like a cheer burst out of the chest of Spike, when he saw deeper water around him, and fancied he could now trace a channel that would quite carry him beyond the extent of the reef. It was arrested only half uttered, however, by a communication from the boatswain, who sat on a midship thwart, his arms folded, and his eye on the brig and the boats.

"There goes the *Molly's* masts, sir! Both have gone together; and as good sticks was they, before them bombshells passed through our rigging, as was ever stepped in a keelson!"

The cheer was changed to something like a groan, while a murmur of regret passed through the boat.

"What news from the man-of-war's men, boatswain? Do they still stand down on a mere wreck?"

"No, sir; they seem to give it up, and are getting out their oars to pull back to their ship. A pretty time they'll have of it too. The cutter that gets to windward half a mile in an hour, ag'in such a sea, and such a breeze, must be well pulled and better steered. One chap, however, sir, seems to hold on."

Spike now ventured to look behind him, commanding an experienced hand to take the helm. In order to do this he was obliged to change places with the man he had selected to come aft, which brought him on a thwart alongside of the boatswain and one or two other of his confidants. Here a whispered conference took place, which lasted several minutes, Spike appearing to be giving instructions to the men.

By this time the yawl was more than a mile from the wreck, all the man-of-war boats but one had lowered their sails, and were pulling slowly and with great labor back toward the ship, the cutter that kept on evidently laying her course after the yawl, instead of standing on toward the

wreck. The brig was breaking up fast, with every probability that nothing would be left of her in a few minutes. As for the yawl, while clear of the white water, it got along without receiving many seas aboard, though the men in its bottom were kept bailing without intermission. It appeared to Spike that so long as they remained on the reef, and could keep clear of breakers—a most difficult thing, however—they could fare better than if in deeper water, where the swell of the sea, and the coaming of the waves, menaced so small and so deep-loaded a craft with serious danger. As it was, two or three men could barely keep the boat clear, working incessantly, and much of the time with a foot or two of water in her.

Josh and Simon had taken their seats, side by side, with that sort of dependence and submission that causes the American black to abstain from mingling with the whites more than might appear seemly. They were squeezed on to one end of the thwart by a couple of robust old sea-dogs, who were two of the very men with whom Spike had been in consultation. Beneath that very thwart was stowed another confidant, to whom communications had also been made. These men had sailed long in the *Swash*, and having been picked up in various ports, from time to time, as the brig had wanted hands, they were of nearly as many different nations as they were persons. Spike had obtained a great ascendency over them by habit and authority, and his suggestions were now received as a sort of law. As soon as the conference was ended, the captain returned to the helm.

A minute more passed, during which the captain was anxiously surveying the reef ahead, and the state of things astern. Ahead was more white water—the last before they should get clear of the reef; and astern it was now settled that the cutter that held on through the dangers of the place, was in chase of the yawl. That Mulford was in her Spike made no doubt; and the thought embittered even his present calamities. But the moment had arrived for something decided. The white water ahead was much more formidable than any they had passed; and the boldest seaman there gazed at it with dread. Spike made a sign to the boatswain, and commenced the execution of his dire project.

"I say, you Josh," called out the captain, in the authoritative tones that are so familiar to all on board of a ship, "pull in that fender that is dragging alongside."

Josh leaned over the gunwale, and reported that there was no fender out. A malediction followed, also so familiar to those acquainted with ships, and the black was told to look again. This time, as had been expected, the negro leaned with his head and body far over the side of the yawl, to look for that which had no existence, when two of the men beneath the thwart shoved his legs after him. Josh screamed, as he found himself going into the water, with a sort of confused consciousness of the truth; and Spike called out to Simon to "catch hold of his brother-nigger." The cook bent forward to obey when a similar assault on *his* legs from beneath the thwart, sent him headlong after Josh. One of the younger seamen, who was not in the secret, sprung up to rescue Simon, who grasped the extended hand, when the too generous fellow was pitched headlong from the boat.

All this occurred in less than ten seconds of time, and so unexpectedly and naturally, that not a soul beyond those who were in the secret had the least suspicion it was anything but an accident. Some water was shipped, of necessity, but the boat was soon bailed free. As for the victims of this vile conspiracy, they disappeared amid the troubled waters of the reef, struggling with each other. Each and all met the common fate so much the sooner, from the manner in which they impeded their own efforts.

The yawl was now relieved from about five hundred pounds of the weight it had carried—Simon weighing two hundred alone, and the youngish seaman being large and full. So intense does human selfishness get to be, in moments of great emergency, that it is to be feared most of those who remained secretly rejoiced that

they were so far benefited by the loss of their fellows. The Señor Montefalderon was seated on the aftermost thwart, with his legs in the stern-sheets, and consequently with his back toward the negroes, and he fully believed that what had happened was purely accidental.

"Let us lower our sail, Don Esteban," he cried, eagerly, "and save the poor fellows."

Something very like a sneer gleamed on the dark countenance of the captain, but it suddenly changed to a look of assent.

"Good!" he said, hastily—"spring forward, Don Wan, and lower the sail—stand by the oars, men!"

Without pausing to reflect, the generous-hearted Mexican stepped on a thwart and began to walk rapidly forward, steadying himself by placing his hands on the heads of the men. He was suffered to get as far as the second thwart, or past most of the conspirators, when his legs were seized from behind. The truth now flashed on him, and grasping two of the men in his front, who knew nothing of Spike's dire scheme, he endeavored to save himself by holding to their jackets. Thus assailed, those men seized others with like intent, and an awful struggle filled all that part of the craft. At this dread instant the boat glanced into the white water, shipping so much of the element as nearly to swamp her, and taking so wild a sheer as nearly to broach-to. This last circumstance probably saved her, fearful as was the danger for the moment. Everybody in the middle of the yawl was rendered desperate by the amount and nature of the danger incurred, and the men from the bottom rose in their might, underneath the combatants, when a common plunge was made by all who stood erect, one dragging overboard another, each a good deal hastened by the assault from beneath, until no less than five were gone. Spike got his helm up, the boat fell off, and away from the spot it flew, clearing the breakers and reaching the northern wall-like margin of the reef at the next instant. There was now a moment when those who remained could breathe and dared to looked behind them.

The great plunge had been made in water so shoal that the boat had barely escaped being dashed to pieces on the coral. Had it not been so suddenly relieved from the pressure of near a thousand pounds in weight, it is probable that this calamity would have befallen it, the water received on board contributing so much to weigh it down. The struggle between these victims ceased, however, the moment they went over. Finding bottom for their feet, they released each other, in the desperate hope of prolonging life by wading. Two or three held out their arms, and shouted to Spike to return and pick them up. This dreadful scene lasted but a single instant, for the waves dashed one after another from his feet, continually forcing them all, as they occasionally regained their footing, toward the margin of the reef, and finally washing them off into deep water. No human power could enable a man to swim back to the rocks, once to leeward of them, in the face of such seas, and so heavy a blow; and the miserable wretches disappeared in succession, as their strength became exhausted, in the depths of the gulf.

Not a word had been uttered while this terrific scene was in the course of occurrence: not a word was uttered for some time afterward. Gleams of grim satisfaction had been seen on the countenances of the boatswain and his associates, when the success of their nefarious project was first assured; but they soon disappeared in looks of horror, as they witnessed the struggles of the drowning men. Nevertheless, human selfishness was strong within them all, and none there was so ignorant as not to perceive how much better were the chances of the yawl now than it had been on quitting the wreck. The weight of a large ox had been taken from it, counting that of all the eight men drowned; and as for the water shipped, it was soon bailed back again into the sea. Not only, therefore, was the yawl in a better condition to resist the waves, but it sailed materially faster than it had done before. Ten persons still remained in it, however, which brought it down in the water below its

proper load-line; and the speed of a craft so small was necessarily a good deal lessened by the least deviation from its best sailing or rowing trim. But Spike's projects were not yet completed.

All this time the man-of-war's cutter had been rushing as madly through the breakers, in chase, as the yawl had done in the attempt to escape. Mulford was, in fact, on board it; and his now fast friend, Wallace, was in command. The latter wished to seize the traitor, the former to save the aunt of his weeping bride. Both believed that they might follow wherever Spike dared to lead. This reasoning was more bold than judicious, notwithstanding, since the cutter was much larger, and drew twice as much water as the yawl. On it came, nevertheless, faring much better in the white water than the little craft it pursued, but necessarily running a much more considerable risk of hitting the coral, over which it was glancing almost as swiftly as the waves themselves; still, it had thus far escaped —and little did any in it think of the danger. This cutter pulled ten oars; was an excellent sea-boat; had four armed marines in it, in addition to its crew, but carried all through the breakers, receiving scarcely a drop of water on board, on account of the height of its washboards, and the general qualities of the craft. It may be well to add here, that the *Poughkeepsie* had shaken out her reefs, and was betraying the impatience of Captain Mull to make sail in chase, by firing signal-guns to his boats to bear a hand and return. These signals the three boats under oars were endeavoring to obey; but Wallace had got so far to leeward as now to render the course he was pursuing the wisest.

Mrs. Budd and Biddy had seen the struggle in which the Señor Montefalderon had been lost, in a sort of stupid horror. Both had screamed, as was their wont, though neither probably suspected the truth. But the fell designs of Spike extended to them, as well as to those whom he had already destroyed. Now the boat was in deep water, running along the margin of the reef, the waves were much increased in magnitude, and the coam of the sea was far more menacing to the boat. This would not have been the case had the rocks formed a lee; but they did not, running too near the direction of the trades to prevent the billows, that got up a mile or so in the offing, from sending their swell quite home to the reef. It was this swell, indeed, which caused the line of white water along the northern margin of the coral, washing on the rocks by a sort of lateral effort, and breaking as a matter of course. In many places, no boat could have lived to pass through it.

Another consideration influenced Spike to persevere. The cutter had been overhauling him, hand over hand, but since the yawl was relieved of the weight of no less than eight men, the difference in the rate of sailing was manifestly diminished. The man-of-war's boat drew nearer, but by no means as fast as it had previously done. A point was now reached in the trim of the yawl, when a very few hundreds in weight might make the most important change in her favor; and this change the captain was determined to produce. By this time the cutter was in deep water, as well as himself, safe through all the dangers of the reef, and she was less than a quarter of a mile astern. On the whole, she was gaining, though so slowly as to require the most experienced eye to ascertain the fact.

"Madam Budd," said Spike, in a hypocritical tone, "we are in great danger, and I shall have to ask you to change your seat. The boat is too much by the starn, now we've got into deep water, and your weight amidships would be a great relief to us. Just give your hand to the boatswain, and he will help you to step from thwart to thwart, until you reach the right place, when Biddy shall follow."

Now Mrs. Budd had witnessed the tremendous struggle in which so many had gone overboard, but so dull was she of apprehension, and so little disposed to suspect anything one-half so monstrous as the truth, that she did not hesitate to comply. She was profoundly awed by the horrors of the scene through which she was passing, the raging billows of the gulf, as seen from so small a craft, pro-

ducing a deep impression on her; still a lingering of her most inveterate affectation was to be found in her air and language, which presented a strange medley of besetting weakness, and strong, natural, womanly affection.

"Certainly, Captain Spike," she answered, rising. "A craft should never go astern, and I am quite willing to ballast the boat. We have seen such terrible accidents to-day, that all should lend their aid in endeavoring to get under way, and in averting all possible hamper. Only take me to my poor, dear Rosy, Captain Spike, and everything shall be forgotten that has passed between us. This is not a moment to bear malice; and I freely pardon you all and everything. The fate of our unfortunate friend, Mr. Montefalderon, should teach us charity, and cause us to prepare for untimely ends."

All the time the good widow was making this speech, which she uttered in a solemn and oracular sort of manner, she was moving slowly toward the seat the men had prepared for her, in the middle of the boat, assisted with the greatest care and attention by the boatswain and another of Spike's confidants. When on the second thwart from aft, and about to take her seat, the boatswain cast a look behind him, and Spike put the helm down. The boat luffed and lurched, of course, and Mrs. Budd would probably have gone overboard to leeward, by so sudden and violent a change, had not the impetus thus received been aided by the arms of the men who held her two hands. The plunge she made into the water was deep, for she was a woman of great weight for her stature. Still, she was not immediately gotten rid of. Even at that dread instant, it is probable that the miserable woman did not suspect the truth, for she grasped the hand of the boatswain with the tenacity of a vise, and, thus dragged on the surface of the boiling surges, she screamed aloud for Spike to save her. Of all who had yet been sacrificed to the captain's selfish wish to save himself, this was the first instance in which any had been heard to utter a sound after falling into the sea. The appeal shocked even the rude beings around her, and Biddy chiming in with a powerful appeal to "save the missus!" added to the piteous nature of the scene.

"Cast off her hand," said Spike, reproachfully, "she'll swamp the boat by her struggles—get rid of her at once! Cut her fingers off if she won't let go!"

The instant these brutal orders were given, and that in a fierce, impatient tone, the voice of Biddy was heard no more. The truth forced itself on her dull imagination, and she sat a witness of the terrible scene in mute despair. The struggle did not last long. The boatswain drew his knife across the wrist of the hand that grasped his own, one shriek was heard, and the boat plunged into the trough of a sea, leaving the form of poor Mrs. Budd struggling with the wave on its summit, and amid the foam of its crest. This was the last that was ever seen of the unfortunate relict.

"The boat has gained a good deal by that last discharge of cargo," said Spike to the boatswain, a minute after they had gotten rid of the struggling woman—"she is much more lively, and is getting nearer to her load-line. If we can bring her to *that*, I shall have no fear of the man-of-war's men; for this yawl is one of the fastest boats that ever floated."

"A very little *now*, sir, would bring us to our true trim."

"Ay, we must get rid of more cargo. Come, good woman," turning to Biddy, with whom he did not think it worth his while to use much circumlocution, "*your* turn is next. It's the maid's duty to follow her mistress."

"I know'd it *must* come," said Biddy, meekly. "If there was no mercy for the missus, little could I look for. But ye'll not take the life of a Christian woman widout giving her so much as one minute to say her prayers?"

"Ay, pray away," answered Spike, his throat becoming dry and husky, for, strange to say the submissive quiet of the Irishwoman, so different from the struggle he had anticipated with *her*, rendered him more reluctant to proceed than he had hitherto been in all of that

terrible day. As Biddy knelt in the bottom of the stern-sheets, Spike looked behind him, for the double purpose of escaping the painful spectacle at his feet, and that of ascertaining how his pursuers came on. The last still gained, though very slowly, and doubts began to come over the captain's mind whether he could escape such enemies at all. He was too deeply committed, however, to recede, and it was most desirable to get rid of poor Biddy, if it were for no other motive than to shut her mouth. Spike even fancied that some idea of what had passed was entertained by those in the cutter. There was evidently a stir in that boat, and two forms that he had no difficulty now in recognizing as those of Wallace and Mulford were standing on the grating in the eyes of the cutter, or forward of the foresail. The former appeared to have a musket in his hand, and the other a glass. The last circumstance admonished him that all that was now done would be done before dangerous witnesses. It was too late to draw back, however, and the captain turned to look for the Irishwoman.

Biddy arose from her knees, just as Spike withdrew his eyes from his pursuers. The boatswain and another confidant were in readiness to cast the poor creature into the sea, the moment their leader gave the signal. The intended victim saw and understood the arrangement, and she spoke earnestly and piteously to her murderers.

"It's not wanting will be violence!" said Biddy, in a quiet tone, but with a saddened countenance. "I know it's my turn, and I will save yer sowls from a part of the burden of this great sin. God, and His Divine Son, and the Blessed Mother of Jesus have mercy on me if it be wrong: but I would far radder jump into the sea widout having the rude hands of man on me, than have the dreadful sight of the missus done over ag'in. It's a fearful thing is wather, and sometimes we have too little of it, and sometimes more than we want—"

"Bear a hand, bear a hand, good woman," interrupted the boatswain, impatiently. "We must clear the boat of you, and the sooner it is done the better it will be for all of us."

"Don't grudge a poor morthal half a minute of life, at the last moment," answered Biddy. "It's not long that I'll throuble ye, and so no more need be said."

The poor creature then got on the quarter of the boat, without any one's touching her; there she placed herself with her legs outboard, while she sat on the gunwale. She gave one moment to the thought of arranging her clothes with womanly decency, and then she paused to gaze with a fixed eye and pallid cheek on the foaming wake that marked the rapid course of the boat. The troughs of the sea seemed less terrible to her than their combing crests, and she waited for the boat to descend into the next.

"God forgive ye all this deed, as I do!" said Biddy, earnestly; and bending her person forward, she fell, as it might be "without hands," into the gulf of eternity. Though all strained their eyes, none of them, Jack Tier excepted, ever saw more of Biddy Noon. Nor did Jack see much. He got a frightful glimpse of an arm, however, on the summit of the wave, but the motion of the boat was too swift, and the water of the ocean too troubled, to admit of aught else.

A long pause succeeded this event. Biddy's quiet submission to her fate had produced more impression on her murderers than the desperate, though unavailing, struggles of those who had preceded her. Thus it is ever with men. When opposed, the demon within blinds them to consequences as well as to their duties; but, unresisted, the silent influence of the image of God makes itself felt, and a better spirit begins to prevail. There was not one in that boat who did not, for a brief space, wish that poor Biddy had been spared. With most, that feeling, the last of human kindness they ever knew, lingered until the occurrence of the dread catastrophe which, so shortly after, closed the scene of this state of being on their eyes.

"Jack Tier," called out Spike, some five minutes after Biddy was drowned, but not until another observation had made it plainly apparent to him that the

man-of-war's men still continued to draw nearer, being now not more than fair musket-shot astern.

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Jack, coming quietly out of his hole, from forward of the mast, and moving aft as if indifferent to the danger, by stepping lightly from thwart to thwart, until he reached the stern-sheets.

"It is your turn, little Jack," said Spike, as if in a sort of sorrowful submission to a necessity that knew no law, "we cannot spare you the room."

"I have expected this, and am ready. Let me have my own way, and I will cause you no trouble. Poor Biddy has taught me how to die. Before I go, however, Stephen Spike, I must leave you this letter. It is written by myself, and addressed to you. When I am gone, read it, and think well of what it contains. And now, may a merciful God pardon the sins of both, through love for His Divine Son. I forgive you, Stephen; and should you live to escape from those who are now bent on hunting you to the death, let this day cause you no grief on my account. Give me but a moment of time, and I will cause you no trouble."

Jack now stood upon the seat of the stern-sheets, balancing himself with one foot on the stern of the boat. He waited until the yawl had risen to the summit of a wave, when he looked eagerly for the man-of-war's cutter. At that moment she was lost to view in the trough of the sea. Instead of springing overboard, as all expected, he asked another instant of delay. The yawl sunk into the trough itself, and rose on the succeeding billow. Then he saw the cutter, and Wallace and Mulford standing on its bows. He waved his hat to them, and sprung high into the air, with the intent to make himself seen; when he came down, the boat had shot her length away from the place, leaving him to buffet with the waves. Jack now managed admirably, swimming lightly and easily, but keeping his eyes on the crests of the waves, with a view to meet the cutter. Spike now saw this well-planned project to avoid death, and regretted his own remissness in not making sure of Jack. Everybody in the yawl was eagerly looking after the form of Tier.

"There he is, on the comb of that sea, rolling over like a keg!" cried the boatswain.

"He's through it," answered Spike, "and swimming with great strength and coolness."

Several of the men started up involuntarily and simultaneously to look, hitting their shoulders and bodies together. Distrust was at its most painful height; and bull-dogs do not spring at the ox's muzzle more fiercely than those six men throttled each other. Oaths, curses, and appeals for help succeeded; each man endeavoring in his frenzied efforts to throw all the others overboard, as the only means of saving himself. Plunge succeeded plunge; and when that combat of demons ended, no one remained of them all but the boatswain. Spike had taken no share in the struggle, looking on in grim satisfaction, as the Father of Lies may be supposed to regard all human strife, hoping good to himself, let the result be what it might to others. Of the five men who thus went overboard, not one escaped. They drowned each other by continuing their maddened conflict in an element unsuited to their natures.

Not so with Jack Tier. His leap had been seen, and a dozen eyes in the cutter watched for his person, as that boat came foaming down behind the wind. A shout of "There he is!" from Mulford succeeded; and the little fellow was caught by the hair, secured, and then hauled into the boat by the second lieutenant of the *Poughkeepsie* and our young mate.

Others in the cutter had noted the incident of the hellish fight. The fact was communicated to Wallace, and Mulford said, "That yawl will outsail this loaded cutter with only two men in it."

"Then it is time to try what virtue there is in lead," answered Wallace. "Marines, come forward, and give the rascal a volley."

The volley was fired; one ball passed through the head of the boatswain, killing him dead on the spot. Another went through the body of Spike. The captain

fell in the stern-sheets, and the boat instantly broached-to.

The water that came on board apprised Spike fully of the state in which he was now placed, and, by a desperate effort, he clutched the tiller, and got the yawl again before the wind. This could not last, however. Little by little his hold relaxed, until his hand relinquished its grasp altogether, and the wounded man sunk into the bottom of the stern-sheets, unable to raise even his head. Again the boat broached-to. Every sea now sent its water aboard, and the yawl would soon have filled, had not the cutter come glancing down past it, and rounding-to under its lee, secured the prize.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Man hath a weary pilgrimage,
As through the world he wends;
On every stage, from youth to age,
Still discontent attends;
With heaviness he casts his eye
Upon the road before,
And still remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more."—SOUTHEY.

It has now become necessary to advance the time three entire days and to change the scene to Key West. As this latter place may not be known to the world at large, it may be well to explain that it is a small seaport, situate on one of the largest of the many low islands that dot the Florida reef, that has risen into notice, or indeed into existence as a town, since the acquisition of the Floridas by the American republic. For many years it was the resort of few besides wreckers, and those who live by the business depending on the rescuing and repairing of stranded vessels, not forgetting the salvages. When it is remembered that the greater portion of the vessels that enter the Gulf of Mexico stand close along this reef, before the trades, for a distance varying from one to two hundred miles, and that nearly everything which quits it is obliged to beat down its rocky coast in the Gulf Stream for the same distance, one is not to be surprised that the wrecks, which so constantly occur, can supply the wants of a considerable population. To live at Key West is the next thing to be ing at sea. The place has sea air, no other water than such as is preserved in cisterns, and no soil, or so little as to render even a head of lettuce a rarity. Turtle is abundant, and the business of "turtling" forms an occupation additional to that of wrecking. As might be expected, in such circumstances, a potato s a far more precious thing than a turtle's egg, and a sack of the tubers would probably be deemed a sufficient remuneration for enough of the materials of callipash and callipee to feed all the aldermen extant.

Of late years, the government of the United States has turned its attention to the capabilities of the Florida Reef, as an advanced naval station—a sort of Downs, or St. Helen's Roads, for the West Indian seas. As yet, little has been done beyond making the preliminary surveys, but the day is not probably very distant when fleets will lie at anchor among the islets described in our earlier chapters, or garnish the fine waters of Key West. For a long time it was thought that even frigates would have a difficulty in entering and quitting the port of the latter, but it is said that recent exploration have discovered channels capable of admitting anything that floats. Still, Key West is a town yet in its chrysalis state, possessing the promise rather the fruition of the prosperous days which are in reserve. It may be well to add, that it lies a very little north of the 24th degree of latitude, and in longitude quite five degrees west from Washington. Until the recent conquests in Mexico, it was the most southern possession of the American government, on the eastern side of the continent; Cape St. Lucas, at the extremity of Lower California, however, being two degrees further south.

It will give the foreign reader a more accurate notion of the character of Key West, if we mention a fact of quite recent occurrence. A very few weeks after the closing scenes of this tale; the town in question was, in a great measure, washed away! A hurricane brought in

the sea upon all these islands and reefs, water running in swift currents over places that, within the memory of man, were never before submerged. The lower part of Key West was converted into a raging sea, and everything in that quarter of the place disappeared. The foundation being of rock, however, when the ocean retired the island came into view again, and industry and enterprise set to work to repair the injuries.

The government has established a small hospital for seamen at Key West. Into one of the rooms of the building thus appropriated, our narrative must now conduct the reader. It contained but a single patient, and that was Spike. He was on his narrow bed, which was to be but the precursor of a still narrower tenement—the grave. In the room with the dying man were two females, in one of whom our readers will at once recognize the person of Rose Budd, dressed in deep mourning for her aunt. At first sight, it is probable that a casual spectator would mistake the second female for one of the ordinary nurses of the place. Her attire was well enough, though worn awkwardly, and as if its owner were not exactly at ease in it. She had the air of one in her best attire, who was unaccustomed to be dressed above the most common mode. What added to the singularity of her appearance, was the fact that, while she wore no cap, her hair had been cut into short gray bristles, instead of being long and turned up, as is usual with females. To give a sort of climax to this uncouth appearance, this strange-looking creature chewed tobacco.

The woman in question, equivocal as might be her exterior, was employed in one of the commonest avocations of her sex—that of sewing. She held in her hand a coarse garment, one of Spike's, in fact, which she seemed to be intently busy in mending; although the work was of a quality that invited the use of the palm and sail-needle, rather than that of the timble and the smaller implements known to seamstresses, the woman appeared awkward in her business, as if her coarse-looking and dark hands refused to lend themselves to an occupation so feminine. Nevertheless there were touches of a purely womanly character about this extraordinary person, and touches that particularly attracted the attention, and awakened the sympathy of the gentle Rose, her companion. Tears occasionally struggled out from beneath her eyelids, crossed her dark, sun-burned cheek, and fell on the coarse canvas garment that lay in her lap.

It was after one of these sudden and strong exhibitions of feeling that Rose approached her, laid her own little, fair hand, in a friendly way, though unheeded, on the other's shoulder, and spoke to her in her kindest and softest tones.

"I do really think he is reviving, Jack," said Rose; "and that you may yet hope to have an intelligent conversation with him."

"They all agree he *must* die," answered Jack Tier—for it was *he*, appearing in the garb of his proper sex, after a disguise that had now lasted full twenty years—"and he will never know who I am, and that I forgive him. He must think of me in another world, though he isn't able to do it in this; but it would be a great relief to his soul to know that I forgive him."

"To be sure, a man must like to take a kind leave of his own wife before he closes his eyes forever; and I daresay it would be a great relief to you to tell him that you have forgotten his desertion of you, and all the hardships it has brought upon you in searching for him, and in earning your own livelihood as a common sailor."

"I shall not tell him I've *forgotten* it, Miss Rose; that would be untrue—and there shall be no more deception between us; but I shall tell him that I *forgive* him as I hope God will one day forgive me all *my* sins."

"It is, certainly, not a light offense to desert a wife in a foreign land, and then to seek to deceive another woman," quietly observed Rose.

"He's a willain!" muttered the wife; "but—but—"

"You forgive him, Jack—yes, I'm sure

you do. You are too good a Christian to refuse to forgive him."

"I'm a woman, a'ter all, Miss Rose; and that, I believe, is the truth of it. I suppose I ought to do as you say, for the reason you mention; but I'm his wife—and once he loved me, though that has long been over. When I first knew Stephen, I'd the sort of feelin's you speak of, and was a very different creatur' from what you see me to-day. Change comes over us all with years and sufferin'."

Rose did not answer, but she stood looking intently at the speaker more than a minute. Change had, indeed, came over her, if she had ever possessed the power to please the fancy of any living man. Her features had always seemed diminutive and mean for her assumed sex, as her voice was small and cracked; but, making every allowance for the probabilities, Rose found it difficult to imagine that Jack Tier had ever possessed, even under the high advantages of youth and innocence, the attractions so common to her sex. Her skin had acquired the tanning of the sea; the expression of her face had become hard and worldly; and her habits contributed to render those natural consequences of exposure and toil even more than usually marked and decided. By saying "habits," however, we do not mean that Jack had ever drank to excess, as happens with so many seamen, for this would have been doing her injustice, but she smoked and chewed—practices that intoxicate in another form, and lead nearly as many to the grave as excess in drinking. Thus all the accessories about this singular being partook of the character of her recent life and duties. Her walk was between a waddle and a seaman's roll; her hands were discolored with tar, and had got to be full of knuckles, and even her feet had degenerated into that flat, broad-toed form that, perhaps, sooner distinguishes caste, in connection with outward appearances, than any other physical peculiarity. Yet this being *had* once been young—had once been even *fair*, and had once possessed that feminine air and lightness of form that as often belongs to the youthful American of her sex, perhaps, as to the girl of any other nation on earth. Rose continued to gaze at her companion for some time, when she walked musingly to a window that looked out upon the port.

"I am not certain whether it would do him good or not to see this sight," she said, addressing the wife kindly, doubtful of the effect of her words even on the latter. "But here are the sloop-of-war and several other vessels."

"Ay, she is *there;* but never will his foot be put on board the *Swash* ag'in. When he bought that brig I was still young, and agreeable to him; and he gave her my maiden name, which was Mary, or Molly Swash. But that is all changed; I wonder he did not change the name with his change of feelin's."

"Then you did really sail in the brig in former times, and knew the seaman whose name you assumed?"

"Many years. Tier, with whose name I made free, on account of his size, and some resemblance to me in form, died under my care; and his protection fell into my hands, which first put the notion into my head of hailing as his representative. Yes, I knew Tier in the brig, and we were left ashore at the same time; I, intentionally, I make no question; he, because Stephen Spike was in a hurry, and did not choose to wait for a man. The poor fellow caught the yellow fever the very next day, and did not live eight-and-forty hours. So the world goes; them that wish to live, die; them that wants to die, live!"

"You have had a hard time for one of your sex, poor Jack—quite twenty years a sailor, did you not tell me?"

"Every day of it, Miss Rose—and bitter years have they been; for the whole of that time have I been in chase of my husband, keeping my own secret, and slaving like a horse for a livelihood."

"You could not have been old when he left—that is, when you parted."

"Call it by its true name, and say at once, when he desarted me. I was under thirty by two or three years, and was still like my own sex to look at. All *that* is changed since; but I *was* comely *then*."

"*Why* did Captain Spike abandon you, Jack? you have never told me *that*."

"Because he fancied another. And ever since that time he has been fancying others, instead of remembering me. Had he got *you*, Miss Rose, I think he would have been content for the rest of his days."

"Be certain, Jack, I should never have consented to marry Captain Spike."

"You're well out of his hands," answered Jack, sighing heavily, which was the most feminine thing she had done during the whole conversation, "well out of his hands—and God be praised it is so. He should have died, before I would let him carry you off the island—husband or no husband."

"It might have exceeded your power to prevent it under other circumstances, Jack."

Rose now continued looking out of the window in silence. Her thoughts reverted to her aunt and Biddy, and tears rolled down her cheeks as she remembered the love of one, and the fidelity of the other. Their horrible fate had given her a shock that, at first, menaced her with a severe fit of illness; but her strong, good sense, and excellent constitution, both sustained by her piety and Harry's manly tenderness, had brought her through the danger, and left her as the reader now sees her, struggling with her own griefs, in order to be of use to the still more unhappy woman who had so singularly become her friend and companion.

The reader will readily have anticipated that Jack Tier had early made the females on board the *Swash* her confidantes. Rose had known the outlines of her history from the first few days they were at sea together, which is the explanation of the visible intimacy that had caused Mulford so much surprise. Jack's motive in making his revelations might possibly have been tinctured with jealousy, but a desire to save one as young and innocent as Rose was at its bottom. Few persons but a wife would have supposed our heroine could have been in any danger from a lover like Spike; but Jack saw him with the eyes of her own youth, and of past recollections, rather than with those of truth. A movement of the wounded man first drew Rose from the window. Drying her eyes hastily, she turned toward him, fancying she might prove the better nurse of the two, notwithstanding Jack's greater interest in the patient.

"What place is this—and why am I here?" demanded Spike, with more strength of voice than could have been expected, after all that had passed. "This is not a cabin—not the *Swash*—it looks like a hospital."

"It is a hospital, Captain Spike," said Rose, gently drawing near the bed; "you have been hurt, and have been brought to Key West and placed in the hospital. I hope you feel better, and that you suffer no pain."

"My head isn't right—I don't know—everything seems turned round with me—perhaps it will all come out as it should. I begin to remember—where is my brig?"

"She is lost on the rocks. The seas have broken her into fragments."

"That's melancholy news, at any rate. Ah! Miss Rose! God bless you—I've had terrible dreams. Well, it's pleasure to be among friends—what creature is that—where does *she* come from?"

"That is Jack Tier," answered Rose, steadily. "She turns out to be a woman, and has put on her proper dress, in order to attend on you during your illness. Jack has never left your bedside since we have been here."

A long silence succeeded this revelation. Jack's eyes twinkled, and she hitched her body half aside, as if to conceal her features, where emotions that were unusual were at work with the muscles. Rose thought it might be well to leave the man and wife alone—and she managed to get out of the room unobserved.

Spike continued to gaze at the strange-looking female who was now his sole companion. Gradually his recollection returned, and with it the full consciousness of his situation. He might not have been fully aware of the absolute certainty of his approaching death, but

he must have known that his wound was of a very grave character, and that the result might early prove fatal. Still that strange and unknown figure haunted him; a figure that was so different from any he had ever seen before, and which, in spite of its present dress, seemed to belong quite as much to one sex as to the other. As for Jack—we call Molly, or Mary Swash, by her masculine appellation, not only because it is more familiar, but because the other name seems really out of place, as applied to such a person—as for Jack, then, she sat with her face half averted, thumbing the canvas, and endeavoring to ply the needle, but perfectly mute. She was conscious that Spike's eyes were on her; and a lingering feeling of her sex told her how much time, exposure, and circumstances had changed her person—and she would gladly have hidden the defects in her appearance.

Mary Swash was the daughter as well as the wife of a ship-master, In her youth, as has been said before, she had even been pretty, and down to the day when her husband deserted her she would have been thought a female of a comely appearance rather than the reverse. Her hair in particular, though slightly coarse, perhaps, had been rich and abundant; and the change from the long, dark, shining, flowing locks which she still possessed in her thirtieth year, to the short, gray bristles that now stood exposed without a cap, or covering of any sort, was one very likely to destroy all identity of appearance. Then Jack had passed from what might be called youth to the verge of old age, in the interval that she had been separated from her husband. Her shape had changed entirely; her complexion was utterly gone; and her features, always unmeaning, though feminine and suitable to her sex, had become hard and slightly coarse. Still there was something of her former self about Jack that bewildered Spike; and his eyes continued fastened on her for quite a quarter of an hour in profound silence.

"Give me some water," said the wounded man, "I wish some water to drink."

Jack arose, filled a tumbler and brought it to the side of the bed. Spike took the glass and drank, but the whole time his eyes were riveted on the strange nurse. When his thirst was appeased, he asked:

"Who are you? How came you here?"

"I am your nurse. It is common to place nurses at the bedside of the sick."

"Are you man or woman?"

"That is a question I hardly know how to answer. Sometimes I think myself each; sometimes neither."

"Did I ever see you before?"

"Often, and quite lately. I sailed with you in your last voyage."

"You! That cannot be. If so, what is you name?"

"Jack Tier."

A long pause succeeded this announcement, which induced Spike to muse as intently as his condition would allow, though the truth did not yet flash on his understanding. At length the bewildered man again spoke.

"Are *you* Jack Tier?" he said slowly, like one who doubted. "Yes—I now see the resemblance, and it was *that* which puzzled me. Are they so rigid in this hospital that you have been obliged to put on women's clothes in order to lend me a helping hand?"

"I am dressed as you see, and for good reasons."

"But Jack Tier run, like that rascal Mulford—ay, I remember now; you were in the boat when I overhauled you all on the reef."

"Very true; I was in the boat. But I never run, Stephen Spike. It was *you* who abandoned *me*, on the islet in the gulf, and that makes the second time in your life that you left me ashore, when it was your duty to carry me to sea."

"The first time I was in a hurry, and could not wait for you; this last time you took sides with the women. But for your interference, I should have got Rose, and married her, and all would now have been well with me."

This was an awkward announcement for a man to make to his legal wife. But after all Jack had endured, and all Jack had seen, during the late voyage, she was

not to be overcome by this avowal. Her self-command extended so far as to prevent any open manifestation of emotion, however much her feelings were excited.

"I took sides with the women, because I am a woman myself," she answered, speaking at length with decision, as if determined to bring matters to a head at once. "It is natural for us all to take sides with our kind."

"You a woman, Jack! That is very remarkable. Since when have you hailed for a woman? You have shipped with me twice, and each time as a man, though I've never thought you able to do seaman's duty."

"Nevertheless, I am what you see; a woman born and educated; one that never had on man's dress until I knew you. *You* supposed me to be a man, when I came off to you in the skiff to the eastward of Riker's Island, but I was then what you now see."

"I begin to understand matters," rejoined the invalid, musingly. "Ay, ay, it opens on me; and I now see how it was you made such fair weather with Madam Budd and pretty Rose. Rose *is* pretty, Jack; you *must* admit *that*, though you be a woman."

"Rose *is* pretty—I do admit it; and what is better, Rose is *good*." It required a heavy draft on Jack's justice and magnanimity, however, to make this concession.

"And you told Rose and Madam Budd about your sex; and that was the reason they took to you so on the v'y'ge?"

"I told them who I was, and why I went aboard as a man. They know my whole story."

"Did Rose approve of your sailing under false colors, Jack?"

"You must ask that of Rose herself. My story made her my friend; but she never said anything for or against my disguise."

"It was no great disguise, a'ter all, Jack. Now you're fitted out in your own clothes, you've a sort of half-rigged look, one would be as likely to set you down for a man under jury-canvas as for a woman."

Jack made no answer to this, but she sighed very heavily. As for Spike himself, he was silent for some little time, not only from exhaustion, but because he suffered pain from his wound. The needle was diligently but awkwardly plied in this pause.

Spike's ideas were still a little confused; but a silence and rest of a quarter of an hour cleared them materially. At the end of that time he again asked for water. When he had drunk, and Jack was once more seated, with his side-face toward him, at work with the needle, the captain gazed long and intently at this strange woman. It happened that the profile of Jack preserved more of the resemblance to her former self than the full face; and it was this resemblance that now attracted Spike's attention, though not the smallest suspicion of the truth yet gleamed upon him. He saw something that was familiar, though he could not even tell what that something was, much less to what or whom it bore any resemblance. At length he spoke.

"I was told that Jack Tier was dead," he said, "that he took the fever, and was in his grave within eight-and-forty hours after we sailed. That was what they told me of *him*."

"And what did they tell you of your own wife, Stephen Spike—she that you left ashore at the time Jack was left?"

"They said she did not die for three years later. I heard of her death at New Or*leens*, three years later."

"And how could you leave her ashore—she, your true and lawful wife?"

"It was a bad thing," answered Spike, who, like all other mortals, regarded his own past career, now that he stood on the edge of the grave, very differently from what he had regarded it in the hour of his health and strength. "Yes, it *was* a very bad thing, and I wish it was undone. But it is too late now. She died of the fever, too—that's some comfort; had she died of a broken heart, I could not have forgiven myself. Molly was not without her faults—great faults, I considered them; but, on the whole, Molly was a good creatur'."

"You liked her, then, Stephen Spike?"

"I can truly say that when I married Molly, and old Captain Swash put his da'ghter's hand into mine, that the woman wasn't living who was better, in my judgment, or handsomer in my eyes."

"Ay, ay,—when you *married* her; but how was it a'terward?—when you was tired of her, and saw another that was fairer in your eyes!"

"I desarted her; and God has punished me for the sin! Do you know, Jack, that luck has never been with me since that day. Often and often have I bethought me of it; and sartain as you sit there, no great luck has ever been with me, or my craft, since I went off, leaving my wife ashore. What was made in one v'y'ge was lost in the next. Up and down, up and down the whole time, for so many, many long years, that gray hairs set in, and old age was beginning to get close aboard—and I as poor as ever. It has been rub and go with me ever since; and I have had as much as I could do to keep the brig in motion, as the only means that was left to make the two ends meet."

"And did not all this make you think of your poor wife—she whom you had so wronged?"

"I thought of little else, until I heard of her death at New Or*leens*—and then I gave it up as useless. Could I have fallen in with Molly at any time a'ter the first six months of my desartion, she and I would have come together again, and everything would have been forgotten. I knowed her very nature, which was all forgiveness to me at the bottom, though seemingly so spiteful and hard."

"Yet you wanted to have this Rose Budd, who is only too young, and handsome, and good for you."

"I was tired of being a widower, Jack; and Rose *is* wonderful pretty. She has money, too, and might make the evening of my days comfortable. The brig was old, as you must know, and has long been off of all the insurance offices' books; and she couldn't hold together much longer. But for this sloop-of-war I should have put her off on the Mexicans; and they would have lost her to our people in a month."

"And was it an honest thing to sell an old and worn-out craft to any one, Stephen Spike?"

Spike had a conscience that had become hard as iron by means of trade. He who traffics much, most especially if his dealings be on so small a scale as to render constant investigation of the minor qualities of things necessary, must be a very fortunate man if he preserve his conscience in any better condition. When Jack made this allusion, therefore, the dying man—for death was much nearer to Spike than even he supposed, though he no longer hoped for his own recovery—when Jack made this allusion, then, the dying man was a good deal at a loss to comprehend it. He saw no particular harm in making the best bargain he could; nor was it easy for him to understand why he might not dispose of anything he possessed for the highest price that was to be had. Still, he answered in an apologetic sort of way.

"The brig was old, I acknowledge," he said, "but she was strong, and *might* have run a long time. I only spoke of her capture as a thing likely to take place soon, if the Mexicans got her; so that her qualities were of no great account, unless it might be her speed—and that you know was excellent, Jack."

"And you regret that brig, Stephen Spike, lying as you do on your death-bed, more than anything else?"

"Not so much as I do pretty Rose Budd, Jack; Rosy is so delightful to look at!"

The muscles of Jack's face twisted a little, and she looked deeply mortified; for, to own the truth, she hoped that the conversation had so far turned her delinquent husband's thoughts to the past as to have revived in him some of his former interest in herself. It is true, he still believed her dead; but this was a circumstance Jack overlooked—so hard is it to hear the praises of a rival, and be just. She felt the necessity of being more explicit, and determined at once to come to the point.

"Stephen Spike," she said, steadily, drawing near to the bedside, "you should be told the truth, when you are heard thus extolling the good looks of Rose Budd, with less than eight-and-twenty hours of life remaining. Mary Swash did not die, as you have supposed, three years after you deserted her, but is living at this moment. Had you read the letter I gave you in the boat, just before you made me jump into the sea, *that* would have told you where she is to be found."

Spike stared at the speaker intently; and when her cracked voice ceased, his look was that of a man who was terrified as well as bewildered. This did not arise still from any gleamings of the real state of the case, but from the soreness with which his conscience pricked him, when he heared that his much-wronged wife was alive. He fancied, with a vivid and rapid glance at the probabilities, all that a woman abandoned would be likely to endure in the course of so many long and suffering years.

"Are you sure of what you say, Jack? You wouldn't take advantage of my situation to tell me an untruth?"

"As certain of it as of my own existence. I have seen her quite lately—talked with her of *you* — in short, she is now at Key West, knows your state, and has a wife's feelin's to come to your bedside."

Notwithstanding all this, and the many gleamings he had had of the facts during their late intercourse on board the brig, Spike did not guess at the truth. He appeared astounded, and his terror seemed to increase.

"I have another thing to tell you," continued Jack, pausing but a moment to collect her own thoughts. "Jack Tier—the real Jack Tier—he who sailed with you of old, and whom you left ashore at the same time you desarted your wife, *did* die of the fever, as you was told, in eight-and-forty hours a'ter the brig went to sea."

"Then who, in the name of Heaven, are you? How came you to hail by another's name as well as by another sex?"

"What could a woman do whose husband had desarted her in a strange land?"

"That is remarkable! So *you've* been married? I should not have thought *that* possible; and your husband desarted you, too. Well, such things *do* happen."

Jack now felt a severe pang. She could not but see that her ungainly—we had almost said her unearthly appearance—prevented the captain from even yet suspecting the truth; and the meaning of his language was not easily to be mistaken. That any one should have married *her*, seemed to her husband as improbable as it was probable he would run away from her as soon as it was in his power after the ceremony.

"Stephen Spike," resumed Jack, solemnly, "*I* am Mary Swash—*I* am your wife!"

Spike started in his bed; then he buried his face in the coverlet—and he actually groaned. In bitterness of spirit the woman turned away and wept. Her feelings had been blunted by misfortune and the collisions of a selfish world; but enough of former self remained to make this the hardest of all the blows she had ever received. Her husband, dying as he was, as he must and did know himself to be, shrunk from one of her appearance, unsexed as she had become by habits, and changed by years and suffering.

CHAPTER XVII.

"The trusting heart's repose, the paradise
Of home, with all its loves, doth fate allow
The crown of glory unto woman's brow."
—MRS. HEMANS.

IT has again become necessary to advance the time; and we shall take the occasion thus offered to make a few explanations touching certain events which have been passed over without notice.

The reason why Captain Mull did not chase the yawl of the brig in the *Poughkeepsie* herself, was the necessity of waiting for his own boats that were endeavoring to regain the sloop-of-war. It would not have done to abandon them, inasmuch as the men were so much exhausted by

the pull to windward, that when they reached the vessel all were relieved from duty for the rest of the day. As soon, however, as the other boats were hoisted in, or run up, the ship filled away, stood out of the passage, and ran down to join the cutter of Wallace, which was endeavoring to keep its position, as much as possible, by making short tacks under close-reefed lugs.

Spike had been received on board the sloop-of-war, sent into her sick bay, and put under the care of the surgeon and his assistants. From the first, these gentlemen pronounced the hurt mortal. The wounded man was insensible most of the time, until the ship had beat up and gone into Key West, where he was transferred to the regular hospital, as has already been mentioned.

The wreckers went out the moment the news of the calamity of the *Swash* reached their ears. Some went in quest of the doubloons of the schooner, and others to pick up anything valuable that might be discovered in the neighborhood of the stranded brig. It may be mentioned here, that not much was ever obtained from the brigantine, with the exception of a few spars, the sails, and a little rigging; but, in the end, the schooner was raised, by means of the chain Spike had placed around her, the cabin was ransacked, and the doubloons were recovered. As there was no one to claim the money, it was quietly divided among the conscientious citizens present at its revisiting "the glimpses of the moon," making gold plenty.

The doubloons in the yawl would have been lost but for the sagacity of Mulford. He too well knew the character of Spike to believe he would quit the brig without taking the doubloons with him. Acquainted with the boat, he examined the little locker in the stern-sheets, and found the two bags, one of which was probably the property of Spike, while the other, in truth, belonged to the Mexican government. The last contained the most gold, but the first amounted to a sum that our young mate knew to be very considerable. Rose had made him acquainted with the sex of Jack Tier since their own marriage, and he at once saw that the claims of this uncouth wife, who was so soon to be a widow, to the gold in question, might prove to be as good in law as they unquestionably were in morals. On representing the facts of the case to Captain Mull and the legal functionaries at Key West, it was determined to relinquish this money to the heirs of Spike, as, indeed, they must have done under process, there being no other claimant. These doubloons, however, did not amount to the full price of the flour and powder that composed the cargo of the *Swash*. The cargo had been purchased with Mexican funds; and all that Spike or his heirs could claim was the high freight for which he had undertaken the delicate office of transporting those forbidden articles, contraband of war, to the Dry Tortugas.

Mulford by this time was high in the confidence and esteem of all on board the *Poughkeepsie*. He had frankly explained his whole connection with Spike, not even attempting to conceal the reluctance he had felt to betray the brig after he had fully ascertained the fact of his commander's treason. The manly gentlemen with whom he was now brought in contact entered into his feelings, and admitted that it was an office no one could desire, to turn against the craft in which he sailed. It is true, they could not and would not be traitors, but Mulford had stopped far short of this; and the distinction between such a character and that of an informer was wide enough to satisfy all their scruples.

Then Rose had the greatest success with the gentlemen of the *Poughkeepsie*. Her youth, beauty, and modesty told largely in her favor, and the simple, womanly affection she unconsciously betrayed in behalf of Harry touched the heart of every observer. When the intelligence of her aunt's fate reached her, the sorrow she manifested was so profound and natural, that every one sympathized with her grief. Nor would she be satisfied unless Mulford would consent to go in search of the bodies. The latter knew the hopelessness of such an excursion, but he could

not refuse to comply. He was absent on that melancholy duty, therefore, at the moment of the scene related in our last chapter, and did not return until after that which we are about to lay before the reader. Mrs. Budd, Biddy, and all of those who perished after the yawl got clear of the reef, were drowned in deep water, and no more was seen of any of them; or, if wreckers did pass them, they did not stop to bury the dead. It was different, however, with those who were first sacrificed to Spike's selfishness. They were drowned on the reef, and Harry did actually recover the bodies of the Señor Montefalderon, and of Josh, the steward. They had washed upon a rock that is bare at low water. He took them both to the Dry Tortugas, and had them interred along with the other dead at that place. Don Juan was placed side by side with his unfortunate countryman, the master of his equally unfortunate schooner.

While Harry was absent and thus employed, Rose wept much and prayed more. She would have felt herself almost alone in the world, but for the youth to whom she had so recently, less than a week before, plighted her faith in wedlock. That new tie, it is true, was of sufficient importance to counteract many of the ordinary feelings of her situation; and she now turned to it as the one which absorbed most of the future duties of her life. Still she missed the kindness, the solicitude, even the weaknesses of her aunt; and the terrible manner in which Mrs. Budd had perished made her shudder with horror whenever she thought of it. Poor Biddy, too, came in for her share of the regrets. This faithful creature, who had been in the relict's service ever since Rose's infancy, had become endeared to her, in spite of her uncouth manners and confused ideas, by the warmth of her heart, and the singular truth of her feelings. Biddy, of all her family, had come to America, leaving behind her not only brothers and sisters, but parents living. Each year did she remit to the last a moiety of her earnings, and many a half-dollar that had come from Rose's pretty little hand had been converted into gold, and forwarded on the same pious errand to the green island of her nativity. Ireland, unhappy country! at this moment what are not the dire necessities of thy poor! Here, from the midst of abundance, in a land that God has blessed in its productions far beyond the limits of human wants, a land in which famine was never known, do we at this moment hear thy groans, and listen to tales of suffering that to us seem almost incredible.

In the midst of these chilling narratives, our eyes fall on an appeal to the English nation, that appears in what it is the fashion of some to term the first journal of Europe (!) in behalf of thy suffering people. A worthy appeal to the charity of England seldom fails; but it seems to us that one sentiment of this might have been altered, if not spared. The English are asked to be "*forgetful* of the past," and to come forward to the relief of their suffering fellow-subjects. We should have written "*mindful* of the past," in its stead. We say this in charity, as well as in truth. We come of English blood, and if we claim to share in all the ancient renown of that warlike and enlightened people, we are equally bound to share in the reproaches that original misgovernment has inflicted on thee. In this latter sense, then, thou hast a right to our sympathies, and they are not withheld.

As has been already said, we now advance the time eight-and-forty hours, and again transfer the scene to that room in the hospital which was occupied by Spike. The approaches of death, during the interval just named, had been slow but certain. The surgeons had announced that the wounded man could not possibly survive the coming night; and he himself had been made sensible that his end was near. It is scarcely necessary to add that Stephen Spike, conscious of his vigor and strength, in command of his brig, and bent on the pursuits of worldly gains, or of personal gratification, was a very different person from him who now lay stretched on his pallet in the hospital of Key West, a dying man. By the side of his bed still sat his strange nurse, less peculiar in ap-

pearance, however, than when last seen by the reader.

Rose Budd had been ministering to the ungainly externals of Jack Tier. She now wore a cap, thus concealing the short, gray bristles of hair, and lending to her countenance a little of that softness which is a requisite of female character. Some attention had also been paid to the rest of her attire; and Jack was, altogether, less repulsive in her exterior than when, unaided, she had attempted to resume the proper garb of her sex. Use and association, too, had contributed a little to revive her woman's nature, if we may so express it, and she had begun, in particular, to feel the sort of interest in her patient which we all come in time to entertain toward any objects of our especial care. We do not mean that Jack had absolutely ever ceased to love her husband; strange as it may seem, such had not literally been the case; on the contrary, her interest in him and his welfare had never ceased, even while she saw his vices and detested his crimes; but all we wish to say here is, that she was getting, in addition to the long-enduring feelings of a wife, some of the interest of a nurse.

During the whole time which had elapsed between Jack's revealing her true character, and the moment of which we are now writing, Spike had not once spoken to his wife. Often had she caught his eyes intently riveted on her, when he would turn them away, as she feared, in distaste; and once or twice he groaned deeply, more like a man who suffered mental than bodily pain. Still the patient did not speak once in all the time mentioned. We should be representing poor Jack as possessing more philosophy, or less feeling, than the truth would warrant, were we to say that she was not hurt at this conduct in her husband. On the contrary, she felt it deeply; and more than once it had so far subdued her pride as to cause her bitterly to weep. This shedding of tears, however, was of service to Jack in one sense, for it had the effect of renewing old impressions, and, in a certain way, of reviving the nature of her sex within her—a nature which had been sadly weakened by her past life.

But the hour had at length come when this long and painful silence was to be broken. Jack and Rose were alone with the patient, when the last again spoke to his wife.

"Molly—poor Molly!" said the dying man, his voice continuing full and deep to the last, "what a sad time you must have had of it after I did you that wrong!"

"It is hard upon a woman, Stephen, to turn her out, helpless, on a cold and selfish world," answered Jack, simply, much too honest to affect a reserve she did not feel.

"It was hard, indeed; may God forgive me for it, as I hope ye do, Molly."

No answer was made to this appeal, and the invalid looked anxiously at his wife. The last sat at her work, which had now got to be less awkward to her, with her eyes bent on her needle—her countenance rigid, and, so far as the eye could discern, her feelings unmoved.

"Your husband speaks to you, Jack Tier," said Rose, pointedly.

"May *yours* never have occasion to speak to you, Rose Budd, in the same way," was the solemn answer. "I do not flatter myself that I ever was as comely as you, or that yonder poor dying wretch was a Harry Mulford in his youth, but we were young and happy, and respected once, and loved each other, yet you see what it's all come to!"

Rose was silenced, though she had too much tenderness in behalf of her own youthful and manly bridegroom to dread a fate similar to that which had overtaken poor Jack. Spike now seemed disposed to say something, and she went to the side of his bed, followed by her companion, who kept a little in the background, as if unwilling to let the emotion she really felt be seen, and perhaps conscious that her ungainly appearance did not aid her in recovering the lost affections of her husband.

"I have been a very wicked man, I fear," said Spike, earnestly.

"There are none without sin," answered Rose. "Place your reliance on the medi-

ation of the Son of God, and sins even far deeper than yours may be pardoned."

The captain stared at the beautiful speaker, but self-indulgence, the incessant pursuit of worldly and selfish objects for forty years, and the habits of a life into which the thought of God and the dread hereafter never entered, had incased his spiritual being in a sort of brazen armor, through which no ordinary blow of conscience could penetrate. Still, he had fearful glimpses of recent events, and his soul, hanging as it was over the abyss of eternity, was troubled.

"What has become of your aunt," half whispered Spike — "my old captain's widow? She ought to be here; and Don Wan Montezuma—where is he?"

Rose turned aside to conceal her tears—but no one answered the questions of the dying man. Then a gleaming of childhood shot into the recollection of Spike, and, clasping his hands, he tried to pray. But, like others who have lived without any communication with their Creator through long lives of apathy to His existence and laws, thinking only of the present time, and daily, hourly sacrificing principles and duty to the narrow interests of the moment, he now found how hard it is to renew communications with a Being who has been so long neglected. The fault lay in himself, however, for a gracious ear was open, even over the death-bed of Stephen Spike, could that rude spirit only bring itself to ask for mercy in earnestness and truth. As his companions saw his struggles, they left him for a few minutes to his own thoughts.

"Molly," Spike at length uttered, in a faint tone, the voice of one conscious of being very near his end, "I hope you will forgive me, Molly. I know you must have a hard, hard time of it."

"It is hard for a woman to unsex herself, Stephen; to throw off her very natur', as it might be, and to turn man."

"It has changed you sadly—even your speech is altered. Once your voice was soft and womanish—more like that of Rose Budd's than it is now."

"I speak as them speak among whom I've been forced to live. The forecastle and steward's pantry, Stephen Spike, are poor schools to send women to l'arn language in."

"Try and forget it all, poor Molly! Say to me, so that I can hear you, 'I forget and forgive, Stephen.' I am afraid God will not pardon my sins, which begin to seem dreadful to me, if my own wife refuse to forget and forgive, on my dying bed."

Jack was much mollified by this appeal. Her interest in her offending husband had never been entirely extinguished. She had remembered him, and often with woman's kindness, in all her wanderings and sufferings, as the preceding parts of our narrative must show; and though resentment had been mingled with the grief and mortification she felt at finding how much he still submitted to Rose's superior charms, in a breast as really generous and humane as that of Jack Tier's such a feeling was not likely to endure in the midst of a scene like that she was now called to witness. The muscles of her countenance twitched, the hard-looking, tanned face began to lose its sternness, and every way she appeared to be profoundly disturbed.

"Turn to Him whose goodness and marcy may sarve you, Stephen," she said, in a milder and more feminine tone than she had used now for years, making her more like herself than either her husband or Rose had seen her since the commencement of the late voyage; "my sayin' that I forget and forgive cannot help a man on his death-bed."

"It will settle my mind, Molly, and leave me freer to turn my thoughts to God."

Jack was much affected, more by the countenance and manner of the sufferer, perhaps, than by his words. She drew nearer to the side of her husband's pallet, knelt, took his hands, and said solemnly—

"Stephen Spike, from the bottom of my heart, I *do* forgive you; and I shall pray to God that He will pardon your sins as freely and more marcifully than I now pardon all, and try to forget all that you have done to me."

Spike clasped his hands, and again he tried to pray; but the habits of a whole life are not to be thrown off at will; and he who endeavors to regain, in his extremity, the moments that have been lost, will find, in bitter reality, that he has been heaping mountains on his own soul by the mere practice of sin, which were never laid there by the original fall of his race. Jack, however, had disburdened her spirit of a load that had long oppressed it, and, burying her face in the rug, she wept.

"I wish, Molly," said the dying man, several minutes later—"I wish I had never seen the brig. Until I got that craft, no thought of wronging human being ever crossed my mind."

"It was the Father of Lies that tempts all to do evil, Stephen, and not the brig, which caused the sins."

"I wish I could live a year longer—*only* one year! that is not much to ask for a man who is not yet sixty."

"It is hopeless, poor Stephen. The surgeons say you cannot live one day."

Spike groaned—for the past, blended fearfully with the future, gleamed on his conscience with a brightness that appalled him. And what is that future, which is to make us happy or miserable through an endless vista of time? Is it not composed of an existence in which conscience, released from the delusions and weaknesses of the body, sees all in its true colors, appreciates all, and punishes all? Such an existence would make every man the keeper of the record of his own transgressions, even to the most minute exactness. It would of itself mete out perfect justice, since the sin would be seen amid its accompanying facts, every aggravating or extenuating circumstance. Each man would be strictly punished according to his talents. As no one is without sin, it makes the necessity of an atonement indispensable, and, in its most rigid interpretation, it exhibits the truth of the scheme of salvation in the clearest colors. The soul, or conscience, that can admit the necessary degree of faith in that atonement, and in admitting *feels* its efficacy, throws the burden of its own trangressions away, and remains for ever in the condition of its original existence, pure, and consequently happy.

We do not presume to lay down a creed on this mighty and mysterious matter, in which all have so deep an interest, and concerning which so very small a portion of the human race think much, or think with any clearness when it does become the subject of their passing thoughts at all. We too well know our own ignorance to venture on dogmas which it has probably been intended that the mind of man should not yet grapple with and comprehend. To return to our subject.

Stephen Spike was now made to feel the incubus-load which perseverance in sin heaps on the breast of the reckless offender. What was the most grievous of all, his power to shake off this dead weight was diminished in precisely the same proportion as the burden was increased, the moral force of every man lessening in a very just ratio to the magnitude of his delinquencies. Bitterly did this deep offender struggle with his conscience, and little did his half-unsexed wife know how to console or aid him. Jack had been superficially instructed in the dogmas of her faith, in childhood and youth, as most persons are instructed in what are termed Christian communities—had been made to learn the Catechism, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed—and had been left to set up for herself on this small capital, in the great concern of human existence on her marriage and her entrance on the active business of life.

When the manner in which she had passed the last twenty years is remembered, no one can be surprised to learn that Jack was of little assistance to her husband in his extremity. Rose made an effort to administer hope and consolation, but the terrible nature of the struggle she witnessed induced her to send for the chaplain of the *Poughkeepsie*. This divine prayed with the dying man; but even he, in the last moments of the sufferer, was little more than a passive but shocked witness of remorse, suspended over the abyss of eternity in hopeless dread. We shall not enter into the details of the revolting scene, but simply

add that curses, blasphemy, tremulous cries for mercy, agonized entreaties to be advised, and sullen defiance were all strangely and fearfully blended. In the midst of one of these revolting paroxysms Spike breathed his last. A few hours later his body was interred in the sands of the shore. It may be well to say, in this place, that the hurricane of 1846, which is known to have occurred only a few months later, swept off the frail covering, and that the body was washed away to leave its bones among the wrecks and relics of the Florida Reef.

Mulford did not return from his fruitless expedition in quest of the remains of Mrs. Budd until after the death and interment of Spike. As nothing remained to be done at Key West, he and Rose, accompanied by Jack Tier, took passage for Charleston in the first convenient vessel that offered. Two days before they sailed, the *Poughkeepsie* went out to cruise in the gulf, agreeably to her general orders. The evening previously Captain Mull, Wallace, and the chaplain passed with the bridegroom and bride, when the matter of the doubloons found in the boat was discussed. It was agreed that Jack Tier should have them; and into her hands the bag was now placed. On this occasion, to oblige the officers, Jack went into a narrative of all she had seen and suffered, from the moment when abandoned by her late husband down to that when she found him again. It was a strange account, and one filled with surprising adventures.

In most of the vessels in which she had served, Jack had acted in the steward's department, though she had frequently done duty as a foremast hand. In strength and skill she admitted that she had often failed; but in courage, never. Having been given reason to think her husband was reduced to serving in a vessel of war, she had shipped on board a frigate bound to the Mediterranean, and had actually made a whole cruise as a ward-room boy on that station. While thus employed, she had met with two of the gentlemen present—Captain Mull and Mr. Wallace. The former was then first lieutenant of the frigate, and the latter a past-midshipman; and in these capacities both had been well known to her. As the name she then bore was the same as that under which she now "hailed," these officers were soon made to recollect her, though Jack was no longer the light, trim-built lad he had then appeared to be. Neither of the gentlemen named had made the whole cruise in the ship, but each had been promoted and transferred to another craft, after being Jack's shipmate rather more than a year. This information greatly facilitated the affair of the doubloons.

From Charleston the travelers came north by railroad. Harry made several stops by the way, in order to divert the thoughts of his beautiful young bride from dwelling too much on the fate of her aunt. He knew that home would revive all these recollections painfully, and wished to put off the hour of their return, until time had a little weakened Rose's regrets. For this reason he passed a whole week in Washington, though it was a season of the year that the place is not in much request. Still, Washington is scarce a town, at any season. It is much the fashion to deride the American capital, and to treat it as a place of very humble performance with very sounding pretensions. Certainly, Washington has very few of the peculiarities of a great European capital; but few as these are, they are more than belong to any other place in this country. We now allude to the *distinctive* characteristics of a capital, and not to a mere concentration of houses and shops within a given space.

In this last respect, Washington is much behind fifty other American towns, even while it is the only place in the whole Republic which possesses specimens of architecture on a scale approaching that of the higher classes of the edifices of the old world. It is totally deficient in churches, and theaters, and markets; or those it does possess are, in an architectural sense, not at all above the level of village or country-town pretensions, but one or two of its national edifices do approach the magnificence and grandeur of the old world. The new Treasury

Buildings are unquestionably, on the score of size, embellishments, and finish, *the* American edifice that comes nearest to first-class architecture on the other side of the Atlantic. The Capitol comes next, though it can scarce be ranked, relatively, as high. As for the White House, it is every way sufficient for its purposes and the institutions; and now that its grounds are finished, and the shrubbery and trees begin to tell, one sees about it something that is not unworthy of its high uses and origin. Those grounds which so long lay a reproach to the national taste and liberality, are now fast becoming beautiful, are already exceedingly pretty, and give to a structure that is destined to become historical, having already associated with it the names of Jefferson, Madison, Jackson, and Quincy Adams, together with the *oi polloi* of the later presidents, an *entourage* that is suitable to its pat recollections and its present purposes. They are not quite on a level with the parks of London, it is true, or even with the Tuileries, or Luxembourg, or the Boboli, or the Villa Reale, or fifty more grounds and gardens, of a similar nature, that might be mentioned; but seen in the spring and early summer, they adorn the building they surround, and lend to the whole neighborhood a character of high civilization, that no other place in America can show, in precisely the same form or to the same extent.

This much have we said on the subject of the White House and its precincts, because we took occasion, in a former work, to berate the narrow-minded parsimony which left the grounds of the White House in a condition that was discreditable to the Republic. How far our philippic may have hastened the improvements which have been made, is more than we shall pretend to say; but having made the former strictures, we are happy to have an occasion to say (though nearly twenty years have intervened between the expressions of the two opinions) that they are no longer merited.

And here we will add another word, and that on a subject that is not sufficiently pressed on the attention of a people who, by position, are unavoidably provincial. We invite those whose gorges rise at any stricture on anything American, and who fancy it is enough to belong to the great republic to be great in itself, to place themselves in the front of the State Department, as it now stands, and to examine its dimensions, material and form with critical eyes, then to look along the adjacent Treasury Buildings, to fancy them completed, by a junction with new edifices of a similar construction, to contain the Department of State; next to fancy similar works completed for the two opposite departments; after which, to compare the past and present with the future as thus finished, and remember how recent has been the partial improvement which even now exists. If this examination and comparison do not show, directly to the sense of sight, how much there was and is to criticise, as put in contrast with other countries, we shall give up the individuals in question, as too deeply dyed in the provincial wool ever to be whitened. The present Trinity Church, New York, certainly not more than a third-class European church, if as much, compared with its village-like predecessor, may supply a practical homily of the same degree of usefulness. There may be those among us, however, who fancy it patriotism to maintain that the old Treasury Buildings were quite equal to the new; and of those intense Americans we cry their mercy!

Rose felt keenly on reaching her late aunt's very neat dwelling in Fourteenth Street, New York. But the manly tenderness of Mulford was a great support to her, and a little time brought her to think of that weak-minded, but well-meaning and affectionate relative, with gentle regret, rather than with grief. Among the connections of her young husband, she found several females of a class in life certainly equal to her own, and somewhat superior to the latter in education and habits. As for Harry, he very gladly passed the season with his beautiful bride, though a fine ship was laid down for him, by means of Rose's fortune, now much increased by her aunt's death, and he was absent in Europe when his son was born;

an event that occurred only two months since.

The *Swash*, and the shipment of gunpowder, were thought of no more in the good town of Manhattan. This great emporium—we beg pardon, this great *commercial* emporium—has a trick of forgetting, condensing all interests into those of the present moment. It is much addicted to believing that which never had an existence, and of overlooking that which is occurring directly *under its nose*. So marked is this tendency to forgetfulness, we should not be surprised to hear some of the Manhattanese pretend that our legend is nothing but a fiction, and deny the existence of the *Molly*, Captain Spike, and even of Biddy Noon. But we know them too well to mind what they say, and shall go on and finish our narrative in our own way, just as if there were no such raven-throated commentators at all.

Jack Tier, still known by that name, lives in the family of Captain Mulford. She is fast losing the tan on her face and hands, and every day is improving in appearance. She now habitually wears her proper attire, and is dropping gradually into the feelings and habits of her sex. She never can become what she once was, any more than the blackamoor can become white, or the leopard change his spots; but she is no longer revolting. She has left off chewing and smoking, having found a refuge in snuff. Her hair is permitted to grow, and is already turned up with a comb, though constantly concealed beneath a cap. The heart of Jack, alone, seems unaltered. The strange, tiger-like affection that she bore for Spike, during twenty years of abandonment, has disappeared in regrets for his end. It is succeeded by a most sincere attachment for Rose, in which the little boy, since his appearance on the scene, is becoming a large participator. This child Jack is beginning to love intensely; and the doubloons, well invested, placing her above the feeling of dependence, she is likely to end her life, once so errant and disturbed, in tranquillity and a home-like happiness.

END OF VOLUME SEVEN.

Gift of The People of the United States
Through the Victory Book Campaign
(A. L. A. — A. R. C. — U. S. O.)
To the Armed Forces and Merchant Marine